

## Testing\* Painted Surfaces

**Background:** About 75% of homes and apartment buildings built before 1978 have some lead paint, those built before 1960 have the most lead paint. While lead can be present in paint on any painted surface, lead-based paint is most often found in kitchens and bathrooms, and on windows, doors and railings in the interior. Exterior paint used on clapboards or shingles, window trim, porches, columns and railings of pre-1978 homes usually had high lead content. Surfaces that have been painted several times may have layers of lead paint underneath layers of non-lead paint.

**Method:** To test for lead in paint:



1. Clean the surface with a household cleaner, rinse and dry.
2. Cut a small V-shaped notch (about ¼ inch long) to expose all painted layers down to the bare surface.
3. Activate a LeadCheck® Swab according to the instructions.
4. Rub the activated Swab into the notch for 30 – 60 seconds.
5. Examine the Swab tip and/or test surface for a color change to pink or red.
6. \*If testing paint on commercial structures, (which may have lead chromate paint), wait several hours to check for color change.

### Interpretation of Results:

1. If the Swab and or the test surface turn a pink to red color, the test is positive for lead. Only lead produces a pink to red color with LeadCheck® Swabs.
2. If the Swab and or test surface did not turn pink or red no hazardous level of lead was detected. Use the confirmation card to confirm that the LeadCheck® reagents were active (the circle on the card should turn bright pink).
3. If the Swab and or test surface turn orange, the result is negative for lead but may be positive for barium, which was sometimes added to paint as an extender. If lead were also present in the paint the Swab tip and or test surface would turn pink before turning orange.
4. If the Swab and or test surface turn purple, the result is negative for lead but positive for tin.

Visit our website ([www.LeadCheck.com](http://www.LeadCheck.com)) or call us (800-262-5323) for additional information on testing:

- ✓ Red Paint
- ✓ Paint on Plaster, Gypsum and Stucco
- ✓ Marine, Industrial or Lead Chromate Paints

\*LeadCheck® Swabs are a versatile and sensitive screening tool for the detection of lead on any surface. This note provides a suggested method to allow testing for a specific application.

### COLOR GUIDE FOR LEADCHECK® SWABS PAINT

LeadCheck® Swabs detect lead on painted surfaces and on other surfaces based on a reaction between lead and the lead reactive reagent. In this interaction color development increases in proportion to increasing lead concentration. LeadCheck® Swabs is the only qualitative colorimetric lead detection product that offers the user the opportunity to estimate lead concentration on a site. When LeadCheck® Swabs are used, it is possible to suggest lead concentration ranges associated with each series of color gradations.

A series of colors developed at each concentration of lead would produce the following ranges.



**HIGH**

5.0% -----> 10.0%  
 High Lead Concentration Range  
 (5.0% to 10.0% lead)



**MEDIUM**

0.5% -----> 3.0%  
 Medium Lead Concentration Range  
 (0.5% to 3.0% lead)



**LOW**

0.0% -----> 0.3%  
 Low Lead Concentration Range  
 (0.0% to 0.3% lead)

NOTE: 0.06% is 600 ppm; 0.1% is 1000 ppm; 0.5% is 5000 ppm, etc.