

# Ritchie Enterprises Inc., of Sullivan, Mo., to Pay \$30,000 for Failure to Use Lead Safe Work Practices and Notify Homeowners of Lead Risks

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## Environmental News

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



(Lenexa, Kan., Oct. 23, 2013) – Ritchie Enterprises Inc., a Sullivan, Mo., company doing business as PuroClean Emergency Restoration Services, has agreed to pay a \$30,000 civil penalty to settle allegations that it failed to use proper lead-safe work practices during the restoration of a home built in 1891 near New Haven, Mo., in violation of the Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule (RRP).

Federal lead-based paint regulations exempt emergency repair work in some cases, but Ritchie Enterprises continued working on the house long after the emergency had passed without complying with the RRP Rule.

According to an administrative consent agreement and final order filed by EPA Region 7 in Lenexa, Kan., Ritchie Enterprises was legally required to use proper lead-safe work practices during the renovation and provide owners and occupants of the properties with an EPA-approved lead hazard information pamphlet, known as the Renovate Right pamphlet, before starting renovations at the properties.

The Renovate Right pamphlet helps homeowners and tenants understand the risks of lead-based paint, and how best to minimize these risks to protect themselves and their families. Ritchie Enterprises did not provide this pamphlet, nor did Ritchie Enterprises maintain records of work practices for this renovation and at least two other renovations on pre-1978 homes in Mineral Point and Sullivan, Mo.

A company employee also used a high-speed belt sander without a HEPA exhaust attachment to remove lead-based paint. The use of high-speed machines to remove paint or other surface coatings is prohibited by regulations unless the machine is equipped with a HEPA attachment to collect dust and debris which may contain lead.

EPA became involved in this case a result of a complaint from the homeowner. The company was not a certified RRP contractor at the time of the work.

The RRP Rule requires that contractors that work on pre-1978 dwellings and child-occupied facilities are trained and certified to use lead-safe work practices. This ensures that common renovation and repair activities like sanding, cutting and replacing windows minimize the creation and dispersion of dangerous lead dust. EPA finalized the RRP Rule in 2008 and the rule took effect on April 22, 2010.

This enforcement action addresses RRP Rule violations that could result in harm to human health. Lead exposure can cause a range of adverse health effects, from behavioral disorders and learning disabilities to seizures and death, putting young children at the greatest risk because their nervous systems are still developing.

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/beebe0b489d357e08525735900400c2f/cc0930b8ba9612b085257c0d0069975d!OpenDocument>