



## Guidance on Presuming or Evaluating

### To test or not to test?

When deciding whether to presume the presence of lead-based paint and/or hazards consider two factors:

1. The probability that lead-based paint is present
2. The cost of treating lead hazards

These factors are described below.

**The probability of lead-based paint.** When considering the probability that lead-based paint is present, consider the following:

- ◆ Older buildings, especially those built before 1950, are more likely to have lead-based paint than newer buildings.
- ◆ Properties in poor condition are likely to have lead hazards than properties that are well maintained.
- ◆ You may be able to obtain information about lead-based paint locally. Contact your local health department and local risk assessors and ask them what they have learned about the presence of lead-based paint in specific neighborhoods, in particular kinds of homes. They may even be able to provide data on the probability of lead paint on specific components or in specific rooms (e.g. kitchens, bathrooms, exteriors, painted floors and interior trim).
- ◆ Conduct testing and track the data to develop your own profile of local housing.

**The cost of treating lead hazards.** Consider the cost of performing paint testing or a risk assessment vs. the cost of performing lead hazard controls that may not be necessary. The following are some guidelines on costs.

- ◆ For a very small job, such as repainting one room or re-hanging a door, it may cost little to use safe work practices and a lot more for an evaluation.
- ◆ For a large job, there could be significant costs to performing standard treatments on surfaces that don't contain lead-based paint. In such cases, a risk assessment is likely to save money.
- ◆ It is unwise to assume on abatement jobs.