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 Environmental News

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## **Florida Company Included in EPA Action to Protect Public from Harmful Lead Exposure**

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**ATLANTA** – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) filed a complaint against Dynamic Construction and Roofing, LLC of Florida as part of an announcement that included 62enforcement actions requiring renovation contractors and training providers to protect people from harmful exposure to lead dust and debris, as required by EPA’s Lead-based Paint Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) standards.

The enforcement actions include 55 settlements and six complaints issued between February and October 2014 for renovations performed on pre-1978 homes and child-care facilities. All of the settlements require that the alleged violators certify their compliance with RRP standards and, in most cases, pay civil penalties. In two of the settlements, the violators agreed to fund voluntary lead abatement supplemental environmental projects, which require the removal of lead-based paint and post-construction testing to ensure that no hazardous conditions remain. The settlements led to $213,171 in civil penalties and the violators coming into compliance with federal law. These recent actions are in addition to EPA’s settlement with Lowe’s Home Improvement in April 2014, which included a $500,000 civil penalty as well as implementation of a corporate-wide RRP compliance program.

"Children are most vulnerable to the dangers of lead paint exposure, especially those in predominantly minority and low-income communities, where housing is more likely to contain lead-based paint,” said Cynthia Giles, assistant administrator for EPA’s Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. “These cases to enforce the RRP rule are vitally important to improving compliance among companies that handle lead-based paint. This leads to safer communities, healthier children and a level playing field for companies that follow the law."

Lead dust and debris from improper renovation activities on properties built prior to 1978 is a major source of lead exposure that can cause lead poisoning. Although using lead-based paint in dwellings was prohibited after 1978, it is still present in more than 30 million homes across the nation, in all types of communities. The RRP Rule provides important protections for children and others vulnerable to lead exposure. Even low levels of lead in the blood of children can result in behavior and learning problems, lower IQ and hyperactivity, slowed growth, hearing problems and anemia. In rare cases, ingestion of lead can cause seizures, coma and even death.

The RRP Rule, which is part of the federal Toxic Substances Control Act, is intended to ensure that owners and occupants of pre-1978 “target housing” and “child-occupied facilities” receive information on lead-based paint hazards before renovations begin, that individuals performing such renovations are properly trained and certified, and that renovators and workers follow specific lead-safe work practices during renovations to reduce the potential for exposure to lead.

The penalties in the settlements address the cited violations. Enforcement penalties also help deter violations by others in the regulated industry, and level the playing field for complying companies, since the fines help eliminate the financial advantage a violator may derive from non-compliance which, otherwise, would allow the violator to underbid its complying competitors.

Contractors that are certified under EPA’s RRP standards are encouraged to display EPA’s “Lead-Safe” logo on worker’s uniforms, signs, websites, and other material, as appropriate. Consumers can protect themselves by looking for the logo before hiring a home contractor, and by being generally aware of whether a renovator is following lead-safe work practices when working on their property. Those practices, such as what a renovator must do to minimize lead dust dispersion, are outlined in EPA’s *Renovate Right* lead hazard information pamphlet, available at <http://www2.epa.gov/sites/production/files/documents/renovaterightbrochure.pdf>
Renovators are required to give the pamphlet to property owners and occupants within 60 days before starting any renovation.