



Testing* Paint on Plaster, Cement, or Stucco Surfaces

Background

Plaster has been widely used as the finish surface for interior walls for over 150 years. Composed primarily of calcium sulfate (hemihydrate), plaster may interfere with LeadCheck® color development because some of the lead may bind to the sulfate in the plaster instead of the LeadCheck® reagent. It is possible, however, with a minimum amount of care, to accurately test for lead paint on plaster surfaces using LeadCheck® Swabs.

Method

1. Carefully cut a notch into the paint down to the surface (See Instructions). Try not to break or scratch the plaster surface.
2. Brush or blow away any surface dust collected in the notched area.
3. Activate a LeadCheck® Swab according to the instructions included with the kit.
4. Rub the swab tip into the notched area of the paint for about 30 seconds.
5. Check the swab tip, paint surface and paint edge for a pink to red color development.

OR, if testing a paint chip:

1. Remove a chip of paint, making sure it is free of plaster or other material.
2. Crumble the chip and put it on a lead-free surface such as plastic wrap. Follow steps 3-5 above.

Interpretation

1. If pink or red color develops, lead is present.
2. If no pink color develops, be sure to confirm the negative result by rubbing the swab tip onto a dot on the Test Confirmation Card supplied with the kit. If the confirmation card dot does not immediately turn pink, the test is not valid - surface dust has likely prevented the LeadCheck® color development. Repeat the test using a new LeadCheck® Swab.

NOTE: If a yellow or orange color persists at the notched area or swab tip, this may indicate the presence of barium, which was added to paints as an extender. The yellow/orange result is NOT a positive color change for lead.

*LeadCheck® Swabs are a versatile and sensitive screening tool for the detection of lead on any surface. This applications note provides a suggested method to allow testing for a specific application. Additional information and help are available by calling 800-262-5323 or 508-651-7881.