

Appendix L – Regulatory tools to manage lead-based paint contamination

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Legislation with direct reference to lead in New Zealand

Lead in plumbing products

- **Building Act 2004:** provides for the Building Regulations 1992. Schedule 1 of which is the Building Code. G12 is the clause that covers water supplies
- The lead in plumbing products provision within Acceptable Solution G12/AS1 will be effective from 1 May 2026. Following this date any product that contains copper alloy and is intended for use in contact with potable water for human consumption must be 'lead free'.
- 'Lead free' has been defined as a plumbing product or material in contact with potable water that has a weighted average lead content of no more than 0.25%. **Acceptable Solution G12/AS1 (Water Supplies):** This document was amended to define "lead-free" as a weighted average lead content of no more than 0.25% for products in contact with drinking water. This requirement for "lead-free" copper alloy plumbing products comes into full effect on May 1, 2026.

Lead in drinking water

- **Water Services Act 2021 and Water Services (Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand) Regulations 2022:** These regulations set a maximum acceptable value (MAV) of 0.01 mg/l for lead in drinking water.

Paint and hazardous substances

- **Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Group Standards:** As of March 1, 2025, new rules came into effect for paints and surface coatings.
 - Lead impurities in paints including corrosion inhibitors are limited to 90 parts per million (ppm).
 - All art materials marketed to children must comply with Graphic Materials Group Standard.
- **Lead Process Regulations 1950:** These regulations provide rules for industrial processes involving lead. These will be revoked by the Legislation (Revocations) Order 2025 from 28 October 2025.
- **WorkSafe Guidelines:** The guidelines for managing lead-based paint acknowledge that they have not been updated for the **Health and Safety at Work Act 2015**. They still contain relevant practices for worker safety and managing hazardous substances.

Health monitoring and reporting

- **Health Act 1956:** This Act establishes the system for reporting elevated blood lead levels.
 - In April 2021, the notifiable blood lead absorption level was reduced from 0.48 µmol/l to 0.24 µmol/l.
 - If a blood test shows a level at or above this threshold, health practitioners or laboratories must notify a medical officer of health.

- **WorkSafe New Zealand:** Medical officers of health must report cases of suspected workplace exposure to WorkSafe New Zealand for follow-up under the **Health and Safety at Work Act 2015**.
 - **Fair Trading Act 1986, New Zealand Gazette No 2009-go2660:** Unsafe Goods (Lead in Children's Toys) Indefinite Prohibition Notice 2009
 - Children's toys which contain lead in their accessible parts at a migration level greater than 90mg/kg of toy material are declared to be unsafe goods and are prohibited from supply indefinitely.
 - For the purposes of this notice: migration level means the value calculated after testing in accordance with the procedures and result interpretation provisions of the Australian/ New Zealand Standard AS/NZS ISO 8124.3:2003 entitled "Safety of toys, Part 3: Migration of certain elements".
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