



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Public Health cooperates in lead hazard removal/cleanup

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health is working with the Baldwin County Board of Education and other agencies to help ensure the appropriate removal of lead-based paint from Spanish Fort Elementary School. Health Department specialists are observing while a hazardous materials cleanup team removes lead-based paint chips and dust from the building and grounds.

Ruth Underwood, administrator of Public Health Area 9, said, "The school system has responded swiftly and appropriately. Working together, we are doing all that is possible to protect the children, faculty, support staff, and anyone else who may have been at the school last week. Dr. Robert Ross of Mobile Infirmary has arranged for voluntary blood samples of all school system employees and their children who were at the school when the sandblasting took place."

The Environmental Protection Agency, Region IV in Atlanta, as well as the Alabama Department of Environmental Management and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, have been notified. Painters were sandblasting an awning at the school Friday when multiple layers of paint were exposed, including an old coat of lead-based paint. Lead paint particles may have penetrated classrooms at the school.

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1/7/08