

Rome, New York Rental Company Faces Fine for Failing to Inform Residents about the Presence of Lead-based Paint and Its Dangers

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(New York, N.Y.) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued a complaint against CRM Rental Management, Inc. of Rome, N.Y. for not informing residents of its buildings about potential lead-based paint in their apartments. It is estimated that three-quarters of U.S. residential dwellings built before 1978 contain some lead-based paint. Infants and young children are especially vulnerable to lead-based paint exposure, which can cause IQ deficiencies, reading and learning disabilities, impaired hearing, reduced attention spans, hyperactivity and behavioral problems. CRM Rental Management faces over \$140,000 in potential fines for 43 instances in which the company failed to properly inform residents of four buildings in New Hartford and Rome, New York about the potential presence of lead-based paint.

"Lead paint is a serious threat to children's health and disclosure can arm families with information they need to protect their kids," said Judith A. Enck, EPA Regional Administrator. "Rental agents, property managers and building owners are required to follow EPA lead paint disclosure requirements and make sure people are aware of potential lead hazards in homes."

Lead poisoning remains one of the most prevalent threats to children's well-being but it is also one of the most preventable. Under federal law, families have the right to know whether there are any potential lead-paint hazards in a prospective home, and must be informed about the harm lead can inflict on small children. Pregnant women and children younger than age six are among the most vulnerable to adverse health risks from lead-based paint.

EPA regulations require real estate management companies and property owners that sell or rent housing built before 1978 to provide renters or buyers with a form that contains a warning about the dangers of lead-based paint and discloses information about its presence. People renting or buying an apartment or home must verify that they received the required warning and disclosure information, including the EPA pamphlet, *Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home*. Prospective purchasers have a 10-day opportunity to assess the property for risks for the presence of lead-based paint.

The complaint against CRM Rental Management alleges that the company failed to provide residents with lead-based paint warning and disclosure statements, making them aware of records or reports that would alert them to potential lead-based paint hazards, and secure required signatures verifying that the required information was received.

In collaboration with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Centers for Disease Control, EPA operates the National Lead Information Center, including a toll-free hotline that can be reached at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).

For more information on lead and the risks posed by lead paint, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/lead>.