

# Conn. and Mass. Based Landlords Face Fines for Failing to Notify Tenants about Lead Paint

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(Boston, Mass. – April 11, 2012) The owners of rental properties in Bridgeport, Conn. as well as South Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester, Mass., face EPA penalties for violating federal lead paint disclosure rules. In both cases, these violations potentially put tenants at risk of exposure to lead hazards.

According to a complaint filed by EPA's New England office, Juan Hernandez allegedly violated lead-based paint disclosure requirements seven times when he rented apartment units in Bridgeport, Conn. between 2008 and 2010. Mr. Hernandez faces an EPA penalty of up to \$127,150 for violating federal lead paint disclosure rules. During the time period relevant to EPA's investigation, all of the apartment buildings owned by Mr. Hernandez were located in potential environmental justice areas.

In a separate EPA complaint, Edward Franco, owner of El Paso Management, and its affiliates allegedly violated lead-based paint disclosure requirements when they rented apartment units three times in South Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester in 2009. Most of the tenants involved in this case live in low income and/or minority areas.

Both parties are charged with failing to give tenants required lead hazard information pamphlets, failing to include lead warning statements in leases, failing to disclose any known lead-based paint or lead-based paint hazards, and/or failing to provide records or reports pertaining to lead-based paint or lead-based paint hazards.

Federal lead disclosure rules are meant to give tenants adequate information about the risks associated with lead paint so that they can make informed decisions before signing a lease contract. Property owners leasing housing built before 1978 are required to provide the following information to tenants: the EPA-approved lead hazard information pamphlet, *Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home*; a lead warning statement; statements disclosing any known lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards; and copies of all available records or reports regarding lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards. This information must be provided to tenants before they enter into leases.

Infants and young children are especially vulnerable to lead paint exposure, which can cause developmental impairment, reading and learning disabilities, impaired hearing, reduced attention span, hyperactivity and behavioral problems. Adults with high lead levels can suffer difficulties during pregnancy, high blood pressure, nerve disorders, memory problems and muscle and joint pain.

More information:

Lead-based paint health hazards ([www.epa.gov/ne/eco/ne\\_lead/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/ne/eco/ne_lead/index.html))

Lead-based paint disclosure rule ([www.epa.gov/ne/enforcement/leadpaint/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/ne/enforcement/leadpaint/index.html))

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