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## GENERAL NEWS

### MT Property Manager Convicted for Failure to Provide LBP Disclosures

In a [press release](#) April 15, HUD's Office of Inspector General ([OIG](#)) announced that a real estate agent and property manager in Montana was convicted of a felony and fined \$150,000 for failing to provide required lead-based paint disclosures. This resulted in the exposure of veterans and their families to significant levels of lead. A hazardous material remediation company was also sentenced to two years of probation, a \$50,000 fine, and \$348,000 in restitution paid to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ([VA](#)) for filing false reports claiming that an abatement of lead paint was completed for the housing when it was not.

The property manager provided services for rentals that included multiple homes for military veterans to use as affordable housing. In May 2019, the manager received and forwarded an email from the Montana Department of Commerce requesting information detailing any lead-based paint remediation completed on the homes because the buildings were constructed in approximately 1895 and 1905 (before 1978). However, in June 2019, the property manager signed two Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) forms selecting that "lead-based paint disclosures do not apply to because this property was built on or after January 1, 1978," knowing that the selections were false. Further, the property manager knew about peeling and chipped lead-based paint inside the units, yet continued to select that the units were built after 1978 when they were not. As a result, in September 2021, an 18-month-old child was found eating paint chips inside the unit, and medical testing confirmed that the child had a "very high" elevated blood lead level (EBLL) and required treatment for lead poisoning. Lead poisoning can have catastrophic consequences on children and their development. A review of the units confirmed that almost every unit contained lead-based paint. A subsequent property management company corrected the omission by making lead disclosures to veterans.



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