

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY STUDIES

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FACT SHEET: An Estimate of WAP-Eligible Homes Subject to Historic Preservation Review and Lead-Safe Work Rules

Homes that eligible for the Weatherization Assistance Program because of the lower incomes of their residents are disproportionately likely a) to qualify as potentially historic properties and b) to contain lead paint, in which case special procedures are required to protect the residents during the Weatherization program's work. Data collected in the 2005 Department of Energy Residential Energy Consumption Survey provides a count of the homes affected.

"Historic" Homes: More than one-third of the homes of low and moderate-income energy consumers are 50 years old or older. These must be reviewed by State Historic Preservation Offices for historical significance to determine whether weatherization work would have to include added investments preserving the historic characteristics. A federal model for a state agreement to waive review for most WAP jobs in older homes is available.

In states without agreements, the delays needed for the review and approval can slow the progress of production for this Recovery Act program. The problem could be acute in the Northeast and Midwest regions where a higher share of all homes are over 50 years old; in fact, in the Northeast, the older homes are a majority of the units eligible.

Lead Paint in homes built before 1979 requires that special lead-safe procedures are used and are overseen by trained workers. These precautions protect the home from the dust of lead paint. If Weatherization workers disturb paint on walls and window frames, contamination is possible and must be mitigated. This means that more time is involved in testing and working on a pre-1979 home—which make up the majority of the entire US housing stock and more than two-thirds of the eligible homes. In fact, three-quarters of Mid-Western eligible homes and more than 8 in 10 in New England may require use of lead-safe techniques under supervision of a certified renovator.

The tables below show the figures for the nation (Table 1) and for eligible homes in each region (Table 2).

Table 1

% Eligible and Other Homes covered by Historic Preservation rules in 2010*	Other homes	28%
	W.A.P.-eligible homes	37%
% Eligible and Other Homes Affected by EPA lead safety rules**	Other homes	55%
	W.A.P.-eligible homes	68%

*Built in or before 1959

**includes some built in 1979. They are not affected. [A typical year sees a 1%-2% increase in new homes.

Table 2

% Eligible Homes covered by Historic Preservation rules in 2010*	Northeast	59%
	Midwest	42%
	South	25%
	West	29%
% Eligible Homes Affected by EPA lead safety rules*	Northeast	81%
	Midwest	76%
	South	56%
	West	67%

*Built in or before 1959

Source Data: Residential Energy Consumption Survey 2005, Energy Information Administration, US Dept. Of Energy, Washington, DC. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/recs/>

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