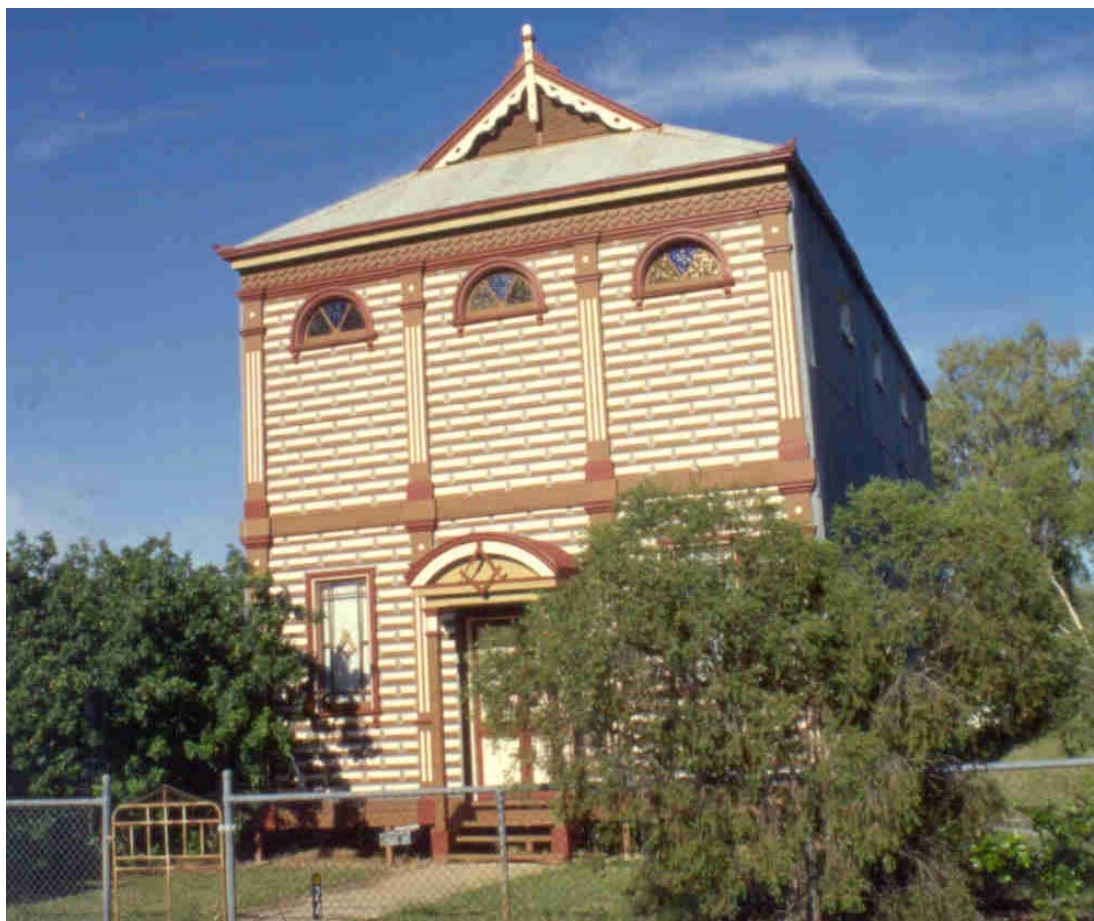


Painting—lead paint

Technical note

This technical note discusses lead paint usage in buildings.



Barcaldine Masonic Temple, Barcaldine (QHR600020)

Lead paint—a cautionary note

When repainting and preparing surfaces for repainting, be aware that buildings constructed prior to 1970 will have one or more layers of lead-based paint. Lead-based paint is a toxic substance that may become a problem when it is damaged or disturbed, when the paint deteriorates and becomes powdery or flaky, or becomes air-borne during paint removal. Lead does not enter the body through the skin but paint dust or fumes can be inhaled or swallowed and then absorbed. When removing lead paint take care to minimise the exposure of family, neighbours and pets to this toxic substance. Follow local and state health and environmental regulations for hazardous waste disposal.

Lead concentrations in paint

Paints containing high concentrations of lead were used extensively on the inside and outside of buildings constructed prior to 1950. Some of these earlier paints contained up to 50 per cent lead. Until the late 1960s, paint with more than one per cent lead was still being used. In 1992, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) set 0.25 per cent as the maximum allowable amount of lead in domestic paint. Lead-based paint was most commonly used on surfaces required to be hard wearing such as window frames,

doors, skirting boards, kitchen and bathroom cupboards, exterior walls, gutters, metal surfaces and fascias. It was also sometimes used on interior walls and ceilings, and pink and red primer both contained lead.

Disturbing any surface containing lead paint

Sound lead-based paint is best left undisturbed. If the removal of paint with a high content of lead or other hazardous materials is required then considerable care should be taken and this work is best left to experienced trades people.

Dry sanding, especially with a power sander, can spread contaminated dust and heat removal methods can cause toxic fumes.

Painting over lead-based paint is a suitable solution for dealing with its management.

Approval for removal of lead paint

For registered places, the removal of lead paint layers requires approval by DERM.

Where can I find out more?

Comprehensive information is available including brochures and guidelines prepared by state and federal government such as:

- Queensland Government Workplace Health and Safety, *Removal of Lead-based Paint*, Brochure-032, January 2001
- Environment Australia, Department of Environment and Heritage, *The six step guide to painting your home*, Commonwealth of Australia, 1999. This booklet is also available online at: <www.environment.gov.au/epg/lead/lead_survey.html>.

Further information

For further information about conservation of heritage places, visit DERM's website <www.derm.qld.gov.au> or contact the department on 13 QGOV (13 74 68) and ask to speak to a heritage officer in your region.

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