



Testudo's Giganti-Guide to Lead Safe Renovator – Refresher Eligibility in Wisconsin

This is Testudo LLC's gigantic, handy-dandy guide for Wisconsin remodeling contractors and property managers to help determine whether they're eligible to attend one of our 4-hour Lead Safe Renovator – Refresher courses. Trust us—this is worth the read!

Welcome, 2014! For thousands of contractors throughout Wisconsin, it's time to take mandatory 4-hour refresher education in order to remain in compliance with the state's Lead Safe Renovator (LSR) rule. Here at Testudo, we've educated thousands of contractors on Wisconsin's Lead Safe Renovation rule to date, and we're excited to continue helping contractors with their refresher education.

Trouble is, some contractors out there are signing up for the Refresher class when they are actually ineligible for it. But by following this guide you'll learn when you'll be eligible in the future, or you may learn you're eligible right now to take a refresher class.

First Things First

First, some ground rules on LSR education. If you're remodeling pre-78 homes and disturbing painted surfaces in the process, you're required to take an initial 8-hour LSR class, apply for and maintain an individual certification from DHS (and ensure you're working for a lead-certified company), and then complete 4-hour refresher education every four years.

DHS realizes we all lead busy lives, so it gives individuals a two-year window to complete refresher education. Thing is, that two-year window begins two years after the date of your initial 8-hour class. For example, if you took your 8-hour class on April 22, 2010, the earliest day you'd be eligible to complete your refresher education would be April 23, 2012. And you would need to have your refresher education completed by April 22, 2014, to ensure no gaps in your LSR compliance.

Following are the most important questions we'd like to ask in order to determine your eligibility.

Question 1: Did you get your blue card?

If your answer is yes, jump ahead to Question 2! If your answer is no, we have one more question for you: Are you a plumber, HVAC installer or sprinkler system installer? If yes, jump ahead to Question 3! If no, continue reading this Question 1 section.

If you never received a "blue card" from DHS after you took your initial 8-hour class—cue the dramatic music here—you are not eligible to take the 4-hour refresher class. (What's more, you're out of compliance with the LSR rule altogether if you've kept on remodeling pre-78 homes after your initial class ... wah, wah. But that's a discussion for a different time.)

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Our next question for you, Mr. or Mrs. No Blue Card, is how long has it been since you took your initial class? If it's been less than two years, very quickly go on over to the DHS' website at <http://1.usa.gov/1k7tck5> and apply for your initial LSR certification. After that's completed and paid, you should receive a blue card in the mail. Moving forward, you'll just have to ensure you take your 4-hour refresher within four years of when you took your initial 8-hour class.

However, if it's been more than two years since you took your initial class and you don't have a blue card, DHS requires you to re-take the 8-hour class in order for you to obtain LSR certification. The thinking is that, if you never applied for certification, you haven't been doing pre-78 jobs and haven't needed knowledge of the LSR rule, so it is most likely not fresh in your mind. Hence, you're required to re-take the full 8-hour class. Another wah, wah ...

At this point, you might be wondering why on Earth the blue card is so important!? Well, it's actually physical proof you're required to keep on your person during pre-78 remodeling jobs that you would show DHS if they entered your job site to conduct a compliance inspection. So, yeah, it's pretty darn important.

Question 2: You have a blue card, but when does it say your training's due by?

There are a few important elements on the oft-cited blue card. There's your picture, vitals like a b-day, height, weight and LSR number, and also two other dates: an expiration date and a "training due by" date. The expiration date sits between your LSR number and birth date. (See the example image, and then immediately please excuse its blurriness.) This is the date on which your individual certification is set to expire—and if you let your certification lapse you'll be non-compliant. To keep up-to-date here you need to renew your individual LSR certification every two years by submitting new paperwork and a fee to DHS.



The other important date is the "training due by" date, indicated in the example above with a big, red arrow. This is the deadline by which you must take 4-hour refresher education every four years to keep a valid LSR certification. Again, you actually have a two-year window prior to this date during which you can take an accredited 4-hour refresher class, like those offered by Testudo LLC.

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Question 3: Are you a plumber or HVAC installer?

So we've established that you are, in fact, a plumber, or HVAC installer or fire sprinkler installer. A Wisconsin Department of Commerce-certified plumber, HVAC or fire sprinkler system installer/servicer working within the scope of his or her Commerce certification is not required to be separately certified by DHS. Therefore, you're not required to carry a blue card from DHS, and you're not required to submit an individual certification application to DHS after taking the initial 8-hour LSR class.

That said, Department of Commerce-certified plumbers and HVAC installers are still required to follow the LSR rule when working in pre-78 housing. Plus, you're still required to take LSR refresher training every four years (and you still have to take refresher training within the two-year window we discussed in the First Things First section above).

However, plumbers and HVAC installers should also keep this in mind: A Commerce-certified plumber, HVAC or fire sprinkler system installer/servicer who conducts renovation work outside the scope of his or her Commerce certification (such as an HVAC installer who also paints houses) is required to comply with the full individual and company certification requirements of the LSR rule. I.e., you would also need to apply to DHS for a LSR certification if you do remodeling work for compensation outside of your usual HVAC and plumbing scope of work.

If you're a plumber or HVAC installer and you're still confused, you might want to take a look at this fact sheet at <http://1.usa.gov/1lyu3Ms>, which was prepared by DHS.

Question 4: Still need help? Give us a call!

Still have questions about whether you're eligible for LSR refresher education? Go ahead and give Testudo a call. We'd be glad to help you better understand this process.

However, it could be a better idea to call DHS at (608) 261-6876. Training companies like Testudo do not have access to all the records DHS maintains, so it could be easier for you to call DHS and get the word straight from them.

Question 5: If you're eligible, why not sign up today?

So you've suffered through nearly 1,000 words discussing all sorts of legalese about the LSR rule, and you've determined that you, or your workers, are 100% eligible for the 4-hour LSR refresher class. Why not take a major load off your mind and sign them up for a class right now? We have plenty of dates to fit your schedule—we offer morning classes, night classes, Saturday classes and noon-start classes. And after you're all signed up, you can rest assured you've committed to teaming with Wisconsin's premier LSR education provider—Testudo LLC.

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