

Maryland Department of the Environment Seeks Stolen Lead Paint Test Tool Containing Small Amounts of Radioactive Material

Device last seen in an SUV parked at the Howard University Graduate Building at 2222 4th Street NW, Washington, DC; not a hazard as long as material remains sealed

BALTIMORE (June 26, 2023) – The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is seeking a lead paint testing device containing a small, sealed amount of radioactive material that was stolen from a locked SUV at Howard University in Washington, DC.

The device, identified as a ThermoFisher Niton model XLP 300, serial number 82078, was discovered stolen at around 10:30 am on June 26, 2023 from an SUV parked at the Howard University Graduate Building located at 2222 4th Street NW, Washington, DC.

The licensed owner, Apex Companies, reported the loss to MDE, Howard University Campus police and the Washington DC Police Department. The device, a Lead Paint Analyzer (pictured below), is silver/gray with dimensions of 9.75 inches by 10.5 inches by 3.75 inches, and weighs about 3 pounds.

The device contains a small sealed amount of radioactive cadmium-109. It is used to make lead measurements by projecting the radiation from the radioactive source into paint and then displaying the reflected radiation on a dial on its top.

The device has a shielding head at the top. If the source is in the shielded position, the presents no hazard to the public. However, any attempt to tamper with the radioactive source inside the device or handle the unshielded source outside the device carries a risk of potentially dangerous exposure.

Anyone with information about the location of the device should avoid handling it and should report it immediately to MDE's Radiological Health Program at 866-MDE-GOTO (866-633-4686), to police at 911, or to Apex Companies, at (301) 417-0200.

