

Publication Instructions: DC Healthy Homes Digest: Issue #8 (December 2021)

The District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE), Lead-Safe and Healthy Housing Division (LSHHD), Healthy Housing Branch produces the DC Healthy Homes Digest (Digest) to connect partners and other stakeholders to information and resources for creating and maintaining safe and healthy housing in the District of Columbia. The quarterly Digest is also a deliverable under DOEE's cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the DC Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.

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Format: Each Digest has a pre-header, banner, main body, and events (left sidebar). The main body begins with several feature articles followed by content organized by standard sections: *What's Buzzing at DOEE?*, *Resources You Can Use*, *Healthy Housing Happenings*, and *Community Connections*. The Digest display full articles in the main body since analytics show a strong open rate for the email but low click-through rates for individual links.

Layout: Please follow the layout used for [previously published Digest issues](#) for guidance on placing lines between content. All text is single line spacing with zero before/after spacing between lines. The content below adheres to the font (Century Gothic), size (18 for article/section headers, 10.5 for main text, 9 for events), and color of the final Digest layout (text color = RGB: 84, 84, 84, Hex #545454; green color = RGB: 36, 100, 38, Hex: #246426). Images can be scaled up or down, or placed to the left, right, or top of text.

- Please link images to relevant webpages if the hyperlinks are included with the images and noted in the comments.

Please also **link the table of contents listed under "In This Issue:" in the left navigation to the main sections within the**

Pre-Header (provides tailored email subject line to boost open rates):

DC Healthy Homes Digest – Lead Poisoning Prevention Week and New DC Lead Registry

Healthy Homes Digest Banner Text (include issue-specific text below in the banner image on next page):

December 2021 • Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Events | Lead Testing Campaign | New DC Lead Registry

Distribution:

- GovDelivery via email (see suggested pre-header/email subject line below)
- DOEE Digest webpage: doee.dc.gov/page/dc-healthy-homes-digest (see below)

Upload latest DC Healthy Homes Digest issue to <https://doee.dc.gov/page/dc-healthy-homes-digest>:

- **Step 1:** Cut and paste the published newsletter to a Word file
- **Step 2:** Change all hyperlinks in both text and images from the automatically inserted GovDelivery URLs back to the original URLs
- **Step 3:** Convert Word file to PDF
- **Step 4:** Check formatting and links
- **Step 5:** Email PDF to David Smart to email to Joseph Morcos with copy to Julia Christian for upload to <https://doee.dc.gov/page/dc-healthy-homes-digest>.



December 2021 • Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Events | Lead Testing Campaign | New DC Lead Registry

Lead Poisoning Prevention Week and Ad Campaign Promote Lead-Free Futures for DC Kids

GET THE FACTS AND GET YOUR HOME AND CHILD TESTED FOR LEAD • Lead poisoning is 100% preventable. The key is understanding what actions you can take to help keep you and your family safe from lead. Mayor Muriel Bowser led the call to action with a proclamation declaring October 24–30, 2021 as Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (“Lead Week”) in the District of Columbia.

During this year’s Lead Week, [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) announced their recommendation to update the Blood Lead Reference Value \(BLRV\) to 3.5 µg/dL](#), down from 5 µg/dL. The BLRV was adopted by the CDC as a way of identifying the top 2.5% of children most at risk of lead exposure. Measuring the amount of lead in blood or the Blood Lead Level (BLL) indicates a child’s level of exposure to lead hazards. The BLRV is based on the 97.5th percentile of the BLL distribution among children 1–5 years old in the U.S. from the two most recent cycles of data from the [National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey \(NHANES\)](#). The CDC’s recommendation to lower the BLRV was based on that data. The BLRV is not intended to represent a safe threshold for lead in the blood. There is no safe level. Even small amounts of lead in a child’s blood can lead to damage to the brain and nervous system, slowed growth and development, and learning and behavior problems. The BLRV is intended as a policy guide to identify the most at-risk children and provide direct services to prevent further exposure to lead hazards and minimize the harm caused by exposure.

The only way to know for sure whether a child has lead in their blood is to do a blood lead test. By law, every child in the District must be tested twice for lead, at age 6 to 14 months, and again at age 22 to 26 months. Continuing an annual tradition, DOEE and the Department of Health Care Finance released a joint letter to DC Medicaid pediatric providers during Lead Week reminding them of the District’s requirements for lead screening and reporting.

Lead Week also featured webinars and twitter chats hosted by the District’s Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) and its partners to raise awareness about lead poisoning

prevention. The interactive sessions included tips and information about resources to help residents remediate lead hazards in the home, including DOEE's [Lead Reduction Program](#) and [Lead Pipe Replacement Assistance Program](#). For the Mayor's proclamation and more information about Lead Week, visit [DOEE's Lead Poisoning Prevention Week webpage](#).

Lead poisoning remains a serious health concern in the District, and children under age six are most at risk. Children exposed to lead-contaminated paint, dust, soil, or water may suffer problems with learning, behavior, and growth that can't be reversed.

How can you help? Download [DOEE's Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Toolkit](#) for sample tweets, articles, and resources you can use in your workplace, place of worship, school, business, or health care facility to educate others about the need for lead screening, home testing, and prevention. The toolkit is available in Amharic, Chinese, English, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese Continue to get the word out even after Lead Week.

You can also follow DOEE on social media for more information about lead and other agency initiatives. Follow DOEE on Twitter (@DOEE_DC) #LeadFreeKids , on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) (@DOEE_DC).

DOEE AND PARTNERS LAUNCH LEAD TESTING AD CAMPAIGN • Leading up to Lead Week, DOEE and the Department of Health Care Finance conducted an ad campaign reminding parents of the importance of testing children for lead exposure. The campaign's central message—[test every child, twice by the age of two](#)—was featured in radio, newspaper, mobile, web, and social media ads during September that delivered more than one million impressions. The campaign's visual ads ran in the Washington Post print and digital versions, with full-page inserts delivered to more than 235,000 District households. At the same time, radio spots aired on iHeartMedia and Urban One stations. Copies of the ads and radio clips can be found on [DOEE's Twice by Two Media and Community Outreach webpage](#).

ASK YOUR DOCTOR TO TEST YOUR CHILD FOR LEAD POISONING

TWICE BY THE AGE OF TWO

Lead poisoning can affect your child's ability to learn, be attentive, and behave.

Your child may look fine YET still have lead poisoning.

The only way to find out is to have your child tested.

Learn more at doee.dc.gov/twicebytwo



Two DOEE grantees expanded the campaign's outreach. The Ethiopian Community Center, Inc. (ECC) translated the ads into Amharic and adapted them for outreach to the Continental African community through an email blast, social media posts, and flyers distributed to more than 1,500 participants at the annual Ethiopian Day Festival on September 5, 2021. ECC also created a [public service video in Amharic and English](#) explaining why children should be tested for lead.



Representing the District Columbia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (DC AAP), Julie Krueger, MD, MPH joined Cheryl Jackson, Urban One's Public Affairs Director, for a half-hour radio interview that aired on 104.1 FM. The engaging question and answer format included discussion of the health risks of lead, the importance of talking with your child's doctor about lead testing, and what families can do if their child has an elevated blood lead level. To listen to the episode and view a list of helpful resources, [visit the Community Affairs Show with Cheryl Jackson: Is Your Home Lead Safe? online](#).

The childhood lead screening ad campaign and grants to EEC and DC AAP were funded by a cooperative agreement between DOEE and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of CDC or HHS.

DOEE Establishes New DC Lead Registry

On March 22, 2021, DOEE launched the DC Lead Registry in CRISP, the District's Designated Health Information Exchange Entity (<https://crispdc.org>). For the first time, pediatric health care providers who access the DC Lead Registry through CRISP, either online or through their own electronic health record, have a quick and easy way to check lead screening status for their patients and to be alerted regarding elevated blood lead levels.

The patient's current and past blood lead level test results can be viewed in CRISP's Health Records and Patient Snapshot tabs. If a patient has an elevated blood lead test result, a Care Alert will also appear in the Patient Snapshot tab. This information can be used to:

- Guide providers' clinical decisions regarding anticipatory guidance, screening, treatment, and repeat testing for lead exposure; and

- Help health plans meet their members' lead testing, treatment, and follow-up care needs.

For more information, email Emmanuel C. Ofoche at emmanuel.ofoche@dc.gov. For access to the DC Lead Registry via CRISP, email Michelle Zancan at michelle.zancan@crisphealth.org.

What's Buzzing at DOEE?

DOEE ANNOUNCES NEW UTILITY AFFORDABILITY ADMINISTRATION • To strengthen its focus on programs that address environmental conditions in housing and their impact on health, DOEE created a sixth administration, the Utility Affordability Administration (UAA). DOEE named Kenley Farmer as the UAA Deputy Director. Previously, Kenley Farmer served as the Associate Director for the former Affordability and Efficiency Division.

UAA encompasses two new divisions, the Utility Assistance Division and the Residential Services Division. Residents needing assistance with their utility bills will apply for services through the Utility Assistance Division, which administers the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#) and [Utility Discount Programs](#). Residents interested in the [Lead Hazard Reduction Program](#) and [Lead Pipe Replacement Assistance Program](#) will apply through the Residential Services Division's new Lead Hazard Reduction Branch.

DOEE CELEBRATES WEATHERIZATION DAY AT CAPITAL HILL HOUSE EXPO • In early Fall, Mayor Bowser proclaimed Saturday, October 30th as D.C. Weatherization Day. DOEE celebrated Weatherization Day by joining the Capital Hill Restoration Society to hold a free House Expo at the Eastern Market North Hall on Saturday, October 30, 2021. DOEE was joined by DCRA, Community Forklift, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), and a wide variety of home service exhibitors including solar installers. During the House Expo, DOEE shared the importance of weatherizing the District's infrastructure and how the [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) can help residents save money. [Visit here for more information about the event and the Capital Hill Restoration Society.](#)



DOEE'S UTILITY DISCOUNT PROGRAM (UDP) ASSISTS RESIDENTS WITH UTILITY COSTS • The UDP continues to provide low-income DC residents with help paying their utility bills. Residents qualify for assistance based on income. In May of 2021, the income guidelines were increased to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Residents who applied after October 2020 and were told they did not qualify based on income are encouraged to apply again. [Visit the UDP webpage for information about the revised income guidelines and how to apply to the program.](#)

DOEE MAKES IT EASIER TO COMPARISON SHOP FOR SOLAR POWER • Mayor Bowser has set the ambitious goal of making DC carbon free by 2050. The [Clean Energy DC Omnibus Act](#) mandates that 100 percent of the District's energy supply come from Tier 1 renewable energy sources by 2032; at least 10 percent of that energy must come from solar energy generated locally. In support of these efforts, DOEE partnered with Sage Energy to help DC

residents compare prices and services from the many different solar companies doing business in the District and make what can be a confusing process easier to navigate and access. [Visit Sage Energy for educational materials, calculators and more.](#) The services are 100% free and you will not be contacted unless you request it. [Visit DOEE for more information about all of the District's solar initiatives.](#)

Resources You Can Use

CDC UPDATES GUIDANCE ON RECALL OF LEADCARE TESTING KITS • On October 14, 2021, [CDC issued a Health Alert Network \(HAN\) Health Update](#) to notify health care providers and health departments about Magellan Diagnostics, Inc.'s expanded recall of its LeadCare II, LeadCare Plus, and LeadCare Ultra blood lead test kits, and to recommend appropriate follow-up actions. Because the devices might cause serious injury by underestimating blood lead levels, the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration identified the recall as a Class I recall](#), the most serious type of recall.

Magellan Diagnostics recalled the test kit lots the manufacturer distributed from October 27, 2020, to August 19, 2021 due to a significant risk of falsely low results, which might result in patients not receiving appropriate follow-up care. Lead exposure in children may lead to developmental delays, learning and behavioral problems, difficulty paying attention, and hearing and speech problems. Lead exposure in pregnant or lactating individuals may cause health problems for both the parent and the developing baby.

CDC strongly recommends that children and other patients continue to receive their required blood lead tests. Health care providers should not delay blood lead testing because of the recall and shortage of replacement test kits. Blood lead testing can be done with either a capillary or venous blood sample which can be submitted to a laboratory for analysis.

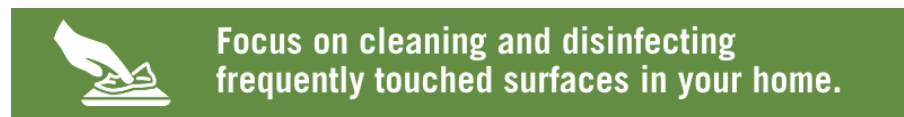
CDC also recommends retesting children for lead with a venous sample if they were tested with the recalled LeadCare lead test kits and had a test result below CDC's blood lead reference value of 3.5 micrograms per deciliter. Children tested with an unknown test lot number after October 27, 2020 should also be retested.

Individuals who are concerned about the recall, or are unsure whether their child has been tested for lead, should contact their health care provider.

DOEE'S HEALTHY HOUSING WEBINARS NOW AVAILABLE ON DEMAND • If you missed DOEE's live webinars during June's Healthy Homes Month, recorded sessions are now available for you to view anytime on [DOEE's DC Healthy Homes webpage](#). DOEE's Lead-Safe and Healthy Housing Division joined with DOEE's Energy Program to host webinars on DOEE's [Lead Hazard Reduction Program](#) and [Lead Pipe Replacement Assistance Program](#). DOEE also partnered with DC Health for a [webinar about how to identify and get rid of bed bugs](#).

NEW HEALTHY HOMES GUIDE TO CLEANING AND DISINFECTION • The National Center for Healthy Housing and National Environmental Health Association released their new [Healthy Homes Guide to Cleaning and Disinfection](#). (Para la página en español, [visite Guía de limpieza y desinfección para hogares saludables.](#)) The guide offers best practices to help

households, schools, early childhood education facilities, and businesses clean and disinfect indoor environments without exposing occupants to environmental hazards. Sections of the guide include *Hand Hygiene and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*, *Cleaning Products*, and *Green Cleaning and Ventilation*.



BECOME A DCRA RESIDENT INSPECTOR • Since the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) launched its [Resident Inspector Program](#) in July 2019 to meet the growing demand for housing inspections, DCRA has trained and certified 200 residents to perform three of the agency’s most frequently requested inspections: housing or property maintenance, illegal construction, and vacant building inspections. Before beginning work as a resident inspector, candidates must complete an application process, pass a background check, complete comprehensive training, pass a series of exams, invest in the purchase of technology, and complete field training. Visit the [Resident Inspector Program](#) for [frequently asked questions](#) and to complete the [online interest form](#).

Healthy Housing Happenings

NATIONAL RADON ACTION MONTH • Every January, National Radon Action Month is an opportunity to raise awareness about the dangers of radon gas. Radon gas is an odorless, colorless gas that occurs in nature and can sometimes be found inside of homes. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers in the US. You cannot smell, see, or taste radon gas, but it can be detected with a radon test. If a test shows that there are high levels in radon in your home, there are ways to remove the dangerous gas.

District residents can obtain a free radon test kit by calling the radon hotline at (202) 535-2302 or [by submitting a request for a free radon test kit online](#).

DOEE’s Healthy Housing Division will observe Radon Action Month with events all month long including an outreach campaign across all 8 wards of the city and community presentations. Also available online is [an updated Radon Map](#) showing areas in the city where radon has been found from 2010-2020.

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK • The District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Service Department (DC Fire and EMS) installed home smoke alarms and posted a [fire safety video](#) and tips during Fire Prevention Week, October 3–9, 2021. The annual commemoration is sponsored by the National Fire Protection Association.

In line with year’s Fire Prevention Week theme, [Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety!™](#), DC Fire and EMS educated residents on the difference between a chirping alarm that signals the need for a new battery or replacement for the smoke alarm or carbon monoxide (CO) detector, and an alarm that means exit the home as quickly as possible. Test all smoke and CO alarms monthly by pressing



the test button to make sure the alarm is working. And if someone in your household is deaf or hard of hearing, install bed shaker and strobe light alarms that will alert that person to the fire.

If you are a District resident in need of a smoke alarm, call 311 or email fems.fireprevention@dc.gov. You can also visit DC Fire and EMS' website, fems.dc.gov, and request a smoke alarm.

LEFT SIDE BAR [OCEO: Please hyperlink to relevant articles/sections]

WELCOME TO THE DC HEALTHY HOMES DIGEST!

This publication connects you to organizations and community members dedicated to creating and maintaining safe, healthy, and energy-efficient housing in the District of Columbia. [Subscribe to the DC Healthy Homes Digest](#) and forward it to your colleagues!

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Events

Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) Home Maintenance Workshop

December 11, 2021, 10:00AM – 12:00PM

CARECEN will host a bilingual (English and Spanish) virtual workshop on home maintenance including discussions about mold and lead with DOEE staff. Other topics include how to save energy and ways to prevent house fires. Join the virtual Zoom event [here](#).

Mayor Muriel Bowser's National Maternal and Infant Health Summit 2021

The 4th Annual National Maternal and Infant Health Summit was held live on September 15-16, 2021 and [videos of the sessions are now available online](#). Experts at the event discussed resources that support women, infants, and families, with a particular focus on inclusivity in health.

US Asthma Summit 2021

The Allergy and Asthma Network and the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology held the annual US Asthma Summit on November 5th, bringing together representatives from asthma coalitions and state asthma programs, school nurses, community health workers, healthcare professionals and other stakeholders from across the country to share best practices and lessons learned.

[Visit the Allergy & Asthma Network page to view the full video from the Summit.](#)

Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF) Advisory Board Meetings

Repeats on the third Thursday of every month

Next meeting: Thursday, December 16th, 2021, 12:30 pm–2:00 pm

The HPTF is a permanent fund organized and administered to facilitate the creation of affordable housing in the District. The HPTF Advisory Board advises the Mayor on the development, financing, and operation of the HPTF and other affordable housing matters for low to moderate-income residents. Board meetings are open to the public. The DC Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) provides administrative support to the HPTF and to the Board.

[To join HPTF Advisory Board meetings via Webex, visit DHCD's website](#)

Connect with the DC Healthy Housing Collaborative

The [DC Healthy Housing Collaborative](#) is a multisector coalition seeking to address substandard housing conditions that contribute to significant health issues affecting District residents. [Sign up to stay connected to the DC Healthy Housing Collaborative](#) and [complete the DC Healthy Housing Collaborative Membership Survey](#). For more information about the DC Healthy Housing Collaborative, contact Abby Charles at the Institute for Public Health Innovation by email at acharles@institutephi.org or by telephone at (202) 400-3555.



Join the DC Asthma Coalition's Fight Against Asthma

The [DC Asthma Coalition](#) is a community partnership of local citizens, health care providers and nonprofit organizations united to fight asthma in the District of Columbia. [Complete a DC Asthma Coalition Membership Application](#) to join or [contact the DC Asthma Coalition](#) to learn more.



Stay up to date on all things Healthy Housing in the District. [Subscribe](#) and forward to your colleagues!

For questions, comments or additions, [contact our Editor](#).

Want to get more involved? Contact the [Lead-Safe and Healthy Housing Division](#), (202) 535-2600

Media Inquiries: Contact the [DOEE Public Information Officer](#)

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