

DC Healthy Homes Digest



December 2018 • *Funding Opportunities, Healthy Homes Trainings, DC Water Update*

WELCOME TO THE DC HEALTHY HOMES DIGEST!

This publication connects you to organizations and community members dedicated to creating and maintaining safe and healthy housing in the District of Columbia.

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Events

[Using Housing Codes to Improve Asthma Health Outcome Webinar](#)

Hosted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, this webinar will highlight the connection between housing codes, asthma, and health outcomes. It will also provide examples of communities using proactive housing code inspections

DOEE Discovery Improves Child Blood Lead Surveillance Nationwide

A TALE OF TWO BUGS IN THE SYSTEM •

Surveillance systems are essential for planning, implementing, and evaluating interventions to address critical public health problems such as childhood lead exposure. In keeping with the theme of the 2018 Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) Annual Cooperative Agreement Recipients' Meeting held on December 4–7, 2018 in Atlanta, "Lead is Local: Strengthening Capacity at All Levels to Sustain Success," DOEE presented an overview of its successful collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to improve the accuracy of the nation's child blood lead surveillance data.



State lead surveillance systems are based on reports of blood lead tests from laboratories. Each quarter, DOEE and other state and local CLPPPs extract data from the [Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Surveillance System \(HHLPPSS\)](#) developed by CDC. Data extracted by states and localities from HHLPPSS are combined with data from other state databases by CDC to update [CDC's state and national surveillance data](#).

While error rates for DOEE's quarterly data submissions are among the lowest in the country,

and enforcement strategies, and will explain the National Healthy Housing Standard and how it can be used to improve asthma outcomes. Featured speakers include Amanda Reddy, National Center for Healthy Housing, and Robert Curry, City of Dallas, Texas.

Date/Time: Tuesday, December 18, 2:00–3:30pm

[Register here](#)

[Lead Poisoning Prevention and Healthy Housing Conference](#)

The [Lead and Healthy Housing Conference](#) will be held in conjunction with the [National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition](#) on February 27–28, 2019 at the Holiday Inn Capitol in Washington, D.C. The conference will bring together professionals from health, housing, community development, community groups, advocacy organizations, industry, real estate firms, and residential and commercial facilities to explore ways to undertake programs and projects designed to prevent lead poisoning, eliminate indoor environmental hazards, and create healthy living and working environments. Presenters will include the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Food and Drug Administration, among others. For more information, visit <http://healthyhousingconferences.com>.

[Register here](#)

December is National Safe Toys and Gifts Month

The [Children's Environmental Health Network \(CEHN\)](#) cautions that although many chemicals have been banned from children's toys, some toys still contain harmful chemicals

Emmanuel C. Ofoche, PhD, Environmental Specialist for DOEE's Lead-Safe and Healthy Housing Division, wanted to see if DOEE could do even better. So, he took the initiative last spring to investigate possible reasons for the remaining errors.

Dr. Ofoche quickly identified and worked with CDC and its HHLPSS vendor to fix two bugs in HHLPSS that reduced the accuracy of the data reported by entities using HHLPSS. The first bug caused HHLPSS to select the wrong date to associate with the child's address at the time the blood was collected for analysis. Such errors could result in missed opportunities to identify, reduce, and remove sources of lead in the child's environment.

The second bug resulted from HHLPSS recognizing blood lead test results as valid only when they are reported as numerical values and not as text. This glitch caused HHLPSS to record as "no result" the test results that laboratories had reported as "below detected." Thus, HHLPSS incorrectly omitted these blood lead tests from the data sent each quarter to CDC.

DOEE provided several rounds of feedback on the fixes CDC's vendor developed to address the two bugs until DOEE verified that they were working properly on DOEE's test platform. The fixes were then sent to HHLPSS users and the two bugs were resolved for all jurisdictions, thereby improving the quality of blood lead test data reported through HHLPSS.

At the meeting, CDC also announced the publication of the [January/February 2019 special supplement on lead poisoning prevention](#) in the *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*. The issue's articles describe how CDC's CLPPP and its funded cooperative agreement partners have addressed recent challenges and developed innovation solutions to drive public health actions at the federal, state, and local level. The issue is available online at <https://journals.lww.com/jphmp/toc/2019/01001>.

Lead Poisoning Prevention Week: For Our Kids

and metals, such as asbestos, lead, and cadmium, have been shown to adversely affect children's health. CEHN encourages consumers to screen toys for safety before making a purchase and to check the Consumer Product Safety Commission recall database at <https://www.cpsc.gov> before buying toys online. You can also subscribe to email recall updates from the CPSC and other U.S. government safety agencies at www.recalls.gov.



[2018 USAsthma Summit Now Available Online](#)

The USAsthma Summit hosted by the [Allergy & Asthma Network](#) on November 15, 2018 in Seattle, WA is now available to be viewed online. Topics include severe asthma, inhaler confusion, barriers to care, the role of pharmacists, advocacy, and more.

[Click here to watch the USAsthma Summit](#)

[AsthmaCommunityNetwork.org has a new look](#)

[AsthmaCommunityNetwork.org](#) provides an interactive space online for community-based asthma programs and the organizations that sponsor them—including health plans and providers, government health and environmental agencies, nonprofits, coalitions, schools and more—to exchange best practices and lessons learned. It provides free access to webinars, program materials, research tools, and other useful resources. The network currently includes more than 1,000 registered

WHAT GIFT DO ALL CHILDREN NEED? A

LEAD-SAFE HOME • That's why Mayor Muriel Bowser led the call to action, proclaiming October 21–27, 2018 as [Lead Poisoning Prevention Week](#)

("Lead Week") in the District of Columbia. Activities conducted throughout Lead Week reminded [parents](#) to get their children and their homes tested for lead, [health care providers](#) to screen children for lead, [property owners](#) to disclose lead-based paint and related hazards, and [contractors](#) to get certified and follow lead-safe work practices.



But protecting children from lead requires a year-round effort. To encourage everyone to take part, the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) released a [Lead Week Toolkit](#) using the theme, "Lead-Free Kids for a Healthy Future." This new resource features locally tailored messages and materials that anyone can use to raise awareness about the need to detect and prevent childhood exposure to lead.

Since health care providers are key partners in prevention, we also teamed with the District's Department of Health Care Finance to distribute our [Annual Screening Letter to Medicaid Providers](#). The letter reminds pediatricians, family practitioners, health clinics, and managed care organizations of the District's requirements for lead screening and reporting. 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.

A child's exposure to lead-contaminated paint, dust, soil, or water may result in lifelong problems with learning, behavior, and growth that can't be reversed. Lead from paint, including lead-contaminated dust, is one of the most common causes of lead poisoning, particularly for children under six years of age. About three out of every four housing units in the District were built before the United States banned the use of lead in residential paint.

The good news? Anyone can help reduce the risk of children's exposure to lead. To mobilize District

programs and more than 4,000 individual members. AsthmaCommunityNetwork.org is supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which partnered with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Allies Against Asthma program and the Merck Childhood Asthma Network, Inc. to launch the network in May 2010.



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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residents to help spread this message, DOEE kicked off [Lead Poisoning Prevention Week](#) with a Tweet Up on Monday, October 22. You can still join the conversation by tweeting at us @DOEE_DC and using the hashtags #nlppw2018 and #leadfreekids.

DOEE also conducted community events. On Tuesday, October 23, we hosted a Fall Party at the Columbia Heights Civic Plaza. Talented local trombonist Jon Noel got the party going with live musical entertainment. He attracted the curiosity of passersby who stopped to get information on how to screen for and prevent childhood lead poisoning.



The following day, we took to the halls of the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) to inform contractors about the [District's lead disclosure, permitting, and certification requirements](#) and the importance of lead-safe work practices. Finally, on Thursday, October 25, we partnered with CentroNía, a local nonprofit educational organization in the District serving low-income children and families, and Qadira Ali Huff, MD, MPH, a pediatrician at Children's Health Center Anacostia, to conduct a bilingual event for parents. During the meet-and-greet session, we talked in English and Spanish about what parents can do to reduce their family's risk of lead exposure and distributed reusable bags filled with useful information.

What's Buzzing at DOEE?

TAKE ACTION AGAINST RADON THIS JANUARY •

You can't see, smell, or taste radon, but this naturally occurring, cancer causing, radioactive gas may be a problem in your home. That's why DOEE and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are using National Radon Action Month to share information about the health risks of radon, and about how you can get an easy-to-use test kit to check radon levels in your home.



Radon is a major cause of lung cancer, second only to cigarette smoking. Radon may be found in all types of buildings. However, your greatest exposure to radon may be where you spend most of your time —at home. Radon gas is produced by a breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water. Radon gas then moves up through the ground into the air and penetrates your home through cracks and other holes in the foundation. Testing is the only way to determine your home's radon levels.

DOEE offers free radon test kits to every resident of the District of Columbia. You can visit <https://doee.dc.gov/radon> to sign up to receive a free test kit. You can also call the Radon Hotline at (202) 535-2302.

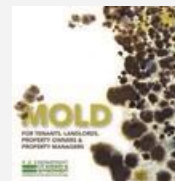
For more information about more ways to spread awareness and take action against radon, visit the EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/radon/national-radon-action-month-information>.

SO, YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT MOLD? •

The best way to prevent mold growth is to control moisture indoors.

However, if you have already have mold growth, it is important to take precautions to limit your exposure to mold and mold spores. For small areas of mold, you may be able to fix the problem yourself, using the tips and techniques described in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home](#). However, if the moldy area is larger than 10 square feet, you are experiencing respiratory health problems, or you believe the mold in your home is caused by contaminated water, then it's time to use a professional.

That's why DOEE's Lead-Safe and Healthy Housing Division has rolled out new educational materials about mold for homeowners, tenants, landlords, property managers and mold professionals. While DOEE does not conduct mold inspections, it does require owners of single- and multi-family properties occupied by tenants to use a DOEE-licensed



professional to provide mold assessment or remediation services. To learn more about mold regulations in residential properties, or to get a list of licensed mold assessors and remediators, visit doee.dc.gov/service/mold.

Resources You Can Use

FUNDING AVAILABILITY: DOEE LEAD OUTREACH GRANTS (DUE 1/9/19) • DOEE has extended the deadline to submit applications for its [Lead Poisoning Prevention Outreach and Collaboration grants](#) to Wednesday, January 9, 2019. DOEE seeks eligible entities to propose solutions for the education and engagement of Latino and African communities in lead screening and prevention, with a focus on Wards 1, 4, and 5. DOEE seeks to fund three projects of approximately \$12,000 each. The project period spans from the date of the grant award through September 29, 2019. This period can be extended and additional funding provided, depending upon the performance of the grantee and the availability of funds. More information on applying for these grants is available at <https://doee.dc.gov/node/1370171>. For additional information regarding this RFA, please write to: 2019LeadOutreach.grants@dc.gov. Responses to questions will be posted online.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY: CHEJ SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM (DUE 1/25/19) • The Center for Health, Environment & Justice (CHEJ) encourages small organizations and all-volunteer groups with budgets under \$50,000 to apply for the [CHEJ Small Grants Program](#). This grant program will support projects that help groups move toward their goals by building leadership, increasing capacity, and/or providing training and education. The program is designed to especially reach people from low-wealth communities and communities of color who are impacted by environmental harms. The deadline for proposals is January 25, 2019. For more information, visit the [CHEJ Small Grants Program](#) and click on "Tier 1 Application." Grants available in this tier range from \$1,000 to \$5,000. If you have questions, call CHEJ at (614) 539-1471, or send an email to Teresa Mills at tmills@chej.org.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY: EPA ENVIRONMENTAL

JUSTICE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM (DUE 2/15/19) •

The [Environmental Justice Small Grants \(EJSG\)](#) program at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awards grants that support community-driven projects designed to engage, educate, and empower communities to better understand local environmental and public health issues and develop strategies for addressing those issues, building consensus in the community, and setting community priorities. The EJSG program will award approximately \$1.5 million nationwide for this competitive opportunity. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 50 grants (5 per EPA region) of up to \$30,000 each. These grants are for one-year projects. Given projected increases in extreme weather events and the vulnerability of underserved populations, this opportunity will emphasize projects that address emergency preparedness and increase resiliency, as well as projects that include the needs of US military veterans and homeless populations. The deadline for proposals is February 15, 2019.

HOUSING LOCATOR SERVICES • The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) offers resources to help residents [find safe and affordable homes](#) in the District of Columbia.



- [orgis](#) a FREE listing service that provides easy access to information about housing opportunities within the District of Columbia.
- [Housing Resource Center](#): Residents visit the center to learn about rent control, landlord and tenant rights and responsibilities, and affordable homeownership assistance options.
- [Housing counseling services](#): DHCD-funded Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) provide counseling services and training to tenants, potential homeowners, and current homeowners.
- [Inclusionary zoning \(IZ\)](#): Households interested in purchasing or leasing an IZ

home must take certain steps in order to be eligible for the IZ lottery process and receive notifications.

- Safe and healthy homes: Resources are available to help residents with home and roof repairs, accessibility upgrades, lead paint hazard remediation and aging in place.

Healthy Housing Happenings

ESSENTIALS FOR HEALTHY HOMES PRACTITIONERS: FREE 2-DAY WORKSHOP

• The DC Healthy Housing Collaborative invites you to register by no later than December 27, 2019 to attend the National Healthy Homes Training Center and Network's flagship course, Essentials for Healthy Homes Practitioners.

Individuals who provide health or inspection services in homes will particularly benefit from attending this course, which identifies and links root causes of health problems in a home to seven principles of healthy housing: keep it dry, keep it clean, keep it pest-free, keep it ventilated, keep it safe, avoid contaminants, and maintain the house. It also complements hazard-specific training in lead-based paint, radon, mold, pests, and asbestos. The course will take place on January 15–16, 2019 at THEARC, 1901 Mississippi Ave SE, Washington, DC 20020. To register, contact Abby Charles, Institute for Public Health Innovation, at acharles@institutephi.org or (202) 400-3555.

**ATTENTION RESIDENT:
OUR RECORDS
INDICATE
YOU HAVE
LEAD PIPES
ON YOUR
PROPERTY**

A service pipe connects the water main in the street to your household plumbing and is owned in its entirety by the property owner.

DC Water encourages the full replacement of lead service pipes in public space and on private property through our voluntary lead service pipe replacement program.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WATER SERVICE PIPE

public water main in public space on private property water service pipe

dc water is life®

DC WATER UPDATE • Lead can enter clean tap water when it sits for extended periods of time in

pipes and plumbing containing lead, especially lead service lines—the pipes that connect homes to the city water supply. While protective compounds added during water treatment effectively help prevent lead release from these pipes, the best way to prevent lead exposure is to replace them with copper pipes.

In October 2018, DC Water distributed a bilingual mailer to approximately 12,000 customers with known lead service lines encouraging them to do just that via the Voluntary Replacement Program. More than 700 customers are now enrolled in the program. This year (through mid-November), DC Water has completed 329 replacements under this program.

Currently, DC Water conducts lead pipe replacements through the voluntary program, as well as in conjunction with water main improvement projects. Per both programs, DC Water covers all costs of replacement in public space (from the street to the property line), and homeowners are responsible for the costs on private property.

With the average cost of replacement—depending on the type of project—ranging from about \$1,000 to \$2,000, DC Water recognizes that affordability is a significant barrier to customers who seek to replace their lead service lines. Thus, DC Water has worked hard with the DC Council to find a solution.

On December 4, 2018 the DC Council unanimously approved new legislation that sets up a mechanism for the city to pay the cost of some lead service line replacements. This new legislation allocates District funds to support two lead water service line replacement programs:

1. Full Lead Water Service Line Replacement Program- District funds cover the cost of replacement on private property, when DC Water replaces the portion of lead line in public space. All customers are eligible for that program regardless of income.
2. Lead Water Service Line Replacement Assistance Program- District provides funds to customers (directly to their contractors) for

replacement on private property when the service pipe in public space is not made of lead. Under this program, customer eligibility for financial assistance is determined by DOEE based on the customer's household income in relation to the area median income (AMI).

Both programs help ensure that the entire lead service pipe is replaced in full. Additionally, the legislation requires landlords to disclose to tenants whether a given property contains any known lead water pipes. It requires the same of homeowners with respect to potential home buyers before any sales occur.

The District government is expecting to set aside \$5 million for these programs, but exact funding will not be known until after the city budget for the next fiscal year is approved by the DC Council. The earliest this funding will be available is October 1, 2019.

DC Water will work with DOEE and will share this information when it becomes available next year—sign up for updates at dcwater.com/dc-water-email-signups. For more information about the bill, visit dcwater.com/LeadBillFAQ.

For more information about lead and minimizing the risk of lead in tap water, visit:

- dcwater.com/lead
- dcwater.com/reducelead
- dcwater.com/identifylead
- dcwater.com/replacelead

Community Connections

HOUSING REMEDIATION PILOT PROJECT • The [DC Healthy Housing Collaborative](#) (DCHHC) recently launched a Housing Remediation Pilot Project with a grant from the [DC Healthy Communities Collaborative](#). Selection of properties for the pilot project will be coordinated through a medical referral system, with a focus on families dealing with chronic asthma. Project partners include Breathe DC's Breathe EASY Project, Children's National Medical System, Children's Law Center, Institute for

Public Health Innovation, and Yachad. The project aims to demonstrate a model for addressing the underlying housing triggers that contribute to health issues through remediation in multi-family rental housing and in single family, owner-occupied housing. For more information about DCHHC's Housing Remediation Pilot Project, email Abby Charles at acharles@institutephi.org.

ADVANCING CITY-LEVEL HEALTHY HOUSING • The National League of Cities released its new report, [Advancing City-Level Healthy Housing: Policies, Practices and Programs in Asthma & Lead – Strategies for Progress](#). Funded by the JBP Foundation and developed with the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health, the report describes policies, programs and practices used by municipal governments in Rochester, NY, Cleveland, OH, Philadelphia, PA, Toledo, OH, Brooklyn Center, MN, Boston, MA, Los Angeles, CA, and Detroit, MI to address lead and asthma triggers in affordable housing.



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