District of Columbia

DC Healthy Homes Digest: Healthy Housing Resource Directory | Mold **Resources at DOEE | Gardening Safety Tips**

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March 2022 · Interagency Working Group on Healthy Housing Releases Resource Directoryl Mold Resources at DOEE I Gardening Safety Tips from DOEE's Office of Urban Agriculture

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.

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your colleagues!

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Events

SAVE THE DATE! Asthma and Allergy Day Capitol Hill

May 3-4, 2022

invites partners from across the country to join in their annual advocacy event, Asthma and Allergy Day Capitol Hill. This year's event is planned to be both in-person and virtual. Registration will open in March. For more information and to register, visit the Asthma and Allergy Network webpage.

The Asthma and Allergy Network

Eviction Prevention – STAY DC Various Dates, Next Event

Rental Counseling and

Tuesday, April 12[,] 2022, 5:30 – 6:30pm EST

The Marshall Heights Community

Development Organization (MHCDO) has empowered low-tomoderate income households with affordable housing opportunities and transformed thousands of lives. If you are having a difficult time finding affordable rental units or need assistance with paying rent, consider attending one of MHCDO's free virtual workshops. Select the date and reserve tickets here.

Sunday, March 19, 2022, 10:00am - 12:00pm EST

Maintenance Workshop

CARECEN Home

The Central American Resource

Center invites you to their virtual Home Maintenance Workshop in English and Spanish featuring tips to prevent exposure to lead in the home as well as a representative from the Office of the Tenant Advocate (OTA) discussing the services provided by the agency. There will be a gift card raffle. Access the workshop through the Zoom link or by entering the Meeting ID (832-1086-3762). Contact CARECEN at (202) 328-9799 for more information.

Meetings Repeats on the third Thursday of every month

Fund (HPTF) Advisory Board

Housing Production Trust

Next meeting: April 21, 2022, 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.

The DC Healthy Housing Collaborative is a multisector coalition seeking to address

Connect with the DC Healthy

Housing Collaborative

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.

DCASTHMACoalition

Asthma The DC Asthma Coalition is a community partnership of local citizens, health care providers and

nonprofit organizations united to

Coalition's Fight Against

Join the DC Asthma

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.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY &

ENVIRONMENT

Stay up to date on all things

District. Subscribe and forward

Healthy Housing in the

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

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Officer

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Interagency Working Group On Healthy Housing Releases Resource Directory For District

Residents

DISTRICT AGENCIES WORKING TOGETHER TO

PROMOTE HEALTHIER LIVING ENVIRONMENTS FOR

DISTRICT RESIDENTS • Established by the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) and the Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF), the Interagency Working Group on Healthy Housing is made up of more than 15 government agencies with different missions, responsibilities, resources, and expertise but who all provide services to address poor housing conditions that impact the health and wellness of DC residents. The goal of the group is to enhance collaboration between agencies and provide a more coordinated approach to identifying and correcting harmful housing conditions and responding to residents' concerns.



risk. Asthma, lead poisoning, injuries, and viral infections are just some of the problems that are caused and/or

exacerbated by poor housing conditions. Children are most vulnerable because they are still developing and in fact, living in poor housing conditions can lead to lifelong health, emotional, learning and behavioral challenges. The Interagency Working Group on Healthy Housing created the Healthy Housing Directory to share simple ways for

everyone to maintain a healthier home and also lists

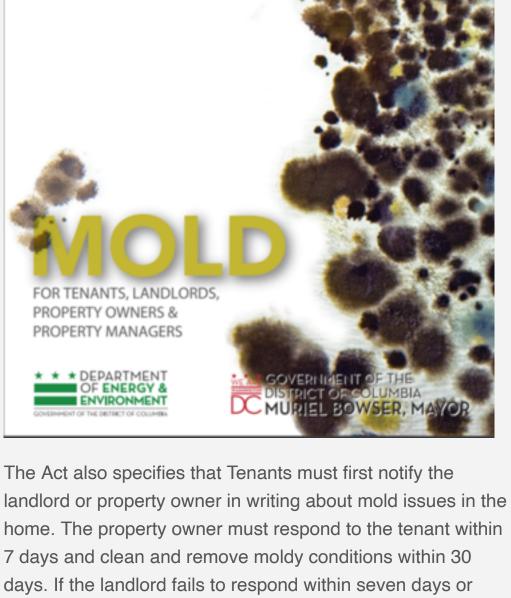
resources available to residents across agencies. The Directory provides the who, what, and how as well as links for more information on eligibility and how to apply. Currently, the Healthy Housing Directory is available online at the DC Partnership for Healthy Homes. The Directory will also soon be available on the Front Door website. Front Door is an interactive website that allows District residents to explore government resources that might be available to them including the resources included in the Healthy Housing Directory and others that will help current and/or future homeowners thrive in the District. **Mold Resources At DOEE**

DOEE HELPS DISTRICT RESIDENTS AND LANDLORDS

UNDERSTAND HOW TO PREVENT MOLD AND **MOISTURE IN THEIR HOMES •** Mold is a fungus that forms

in the natural environment. Mold can grow wherever there is a water and food source, both indoors and outdoors. Some people have no reaction at all to mold. Some people may experience allergic reactions such as sneezing, eye irritations, or nose irritation. For those individuals with allergies and/or asthma, however, exposure to mold can cause health impacts including respiratory attacks. People who don't already have an allergy to mold can develop one simply from exposure. To manage an indoor mold problem, the source of the water intrusion that is causing the mold to grow needs to be found and repaired. Otherwise, even if the mold is removed, it will return. DOEE's Mold Program helps District residents and property owners understand and remain compliant with the Air Quality

Amendment Act of 2014 aka the DC Mold Act (the Act). The Act states that visible mold contamination greater than 10 square feet requires a DOEE licensed mold professional to assess and/or remediate. The mold professional must be licensed by DOEE's Mold Program. Contamination less than 10 square feet can be addressed and removed by a nonlicensed individual who must follow DOEE's mold guidelines found in DOEE's Guidance Document. Mold in caulking and grout in bathrooms and kitchens does not require services from a licensed DOEE mold professional.



repair the mold situation within 30 days, tenants can: Call DOEE's Mold Program at 202 535-2600. Contact the District of Columbia Superior Court Housing Conditions Calendar at 202 879-1133 for assistance with filing a claim against the landlord (property owner). Only an attorney may file claims electronically.

- Choose a mold professional from the list of DOEE-Licensed Mold Professionals and pay for a mold assessor to evaluate the residence. If the tenant decides to bring a case to the Housing Conditions Court against the landlord, the judge may order the
- landlord/property owner to reimburse the tenant for the cost of the mold assessment. To prevent mold from growing, indoor spaces should be kept dry and clean. To achieve this, you can: Use a dehumidifier in particularly humid areas such as basements;

Increase indoor air circulation and ventilation;

Fix plumbing leaks as soon as possible;

windows;

collect condensation.

- Clean and repair roof gutters regularly; Keep air conditioning drip pans clean and drain lines unobstructed and flowing properly; Protect vulnerable areas from flooding;
- Ensure appliances that produce moisture, such as clothing dryers and stoves, vent water vapor to the outside; Insulate cold water pipes and other areas that may

Keep areas prone to humidity, like kitchens and

bathrooms, well ventilated with fans and open

Your Home. What's Buzzing at DOEE?

GARDENING SAFETY TIPS FROM DOEE'S OFFICE OF

URBAN AGRICULTURE • Spring time is around the corner,

For more information about mold, residents can also

reference the EPA's A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and

backyard gardens. Included in those plans should be ways to stay safe from harmful contaminants that can sometimes be found in soil. Lead, for example, can be absorbed by or settle on fruits or vegetables and can poison those who eat the

and many District residents are eagerly planning their

food. As backyard gardening grows in popularity across the District, Kate Lee, Director of DOEE's Office of Urban Agriculture has some advice for first-time gardeners: "For anyone venturing into gardening, a great first step is to test your soil. Soil tests are important for determining if you have risky heavy metals (like lead) in your soil, and for understanding what, if any, soil amendments are necessary to optimize crop growth."



contaminants. The Office of Urban Agriculture recommends

using organic amendments and closely following the

instructions on any packages to minimize any potential

environmental impacts. EPA's Urban Gardening Fun Fact

Sheet describes techniques commonly used to eliminate

exposure to soil contaminants, including using raised soil

beds, adding a thick layer of organic matter to the soil as physical barrier to contamination, and removing and replacing contaminated soil with clean soil tested and verified to be contaminant-free. Visit the DOEE Office of Urban Agriculture's webpage to learn about its work to increase food production in the District, or email Kate Lee at Kate.Lee@dc.gov. DOEE's fact sheet on lead in the environment also has tips for reducing children's outdoor exposure to lead. **Resources You Can Use**

ASTHMA FRIENDLY HOME CHECKLIST • Many common

home. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America has

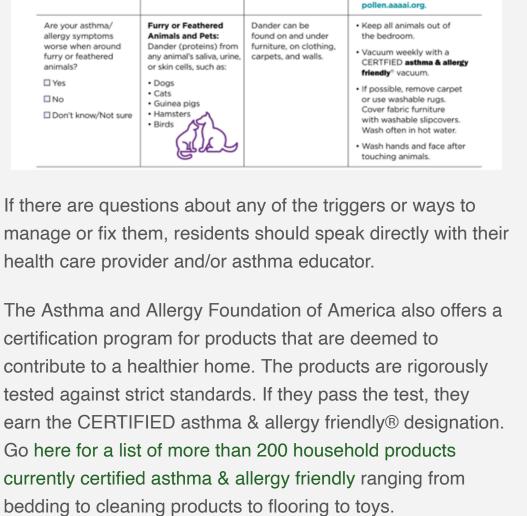
developed an Asthma-Friendly Home Checklist specifically to

triggers of asthma and allergy symptoms originate in the

help people identify and reduce triggers in their home

environment. The checklist provides a list of questions as well as information on the most common allergy and asthma triggers, and where they tend to be located. It also provides recommendations for how to fix the triggers or prevent

exposure. **ASTHMA-FRIENDLY HOME CHECKLIST** Is this your trigger? What is this trigger? Where is it found? Are your asthma/ Pollen: Tiny grains allergy symptoms released from trees, most seasons, but is worse during certain weeds, and grasses not have air conditioning usually worse in spring go to a cool place during the air hot days (library, mall, cooling center). ☐ Spring ☐ Fall grasses Stay inside if it's a high Summer: Grasses pollen day. □No and weeds · Cover your hair when you Fall: Ragweed and go outside or shower from head to toe before bed. ☐ Don't know/Not sure trees Winter: Some trees doctor's orders. · Check pollen levels on your local news, allergist's



website, weather app, or

More information about asthma triggers can also be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

GEARING UP FOR ASTHMA AND ALLERGY

well as the connection between housing conditions and

Healthy Housing Happenings AWARENESS MONTH • Each year, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) declares May to be Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month. In addition, World Asthma Day will be observed this year on May 4, 2022. Since May is peak allergy season, it's the perfect time to educate about the prevalence and impact of these respiratory diseases, as

respiratory illnesses. Save the Date for the Annual Asthma & Allergy Network's Asthma & Allergy Day Capitol Hill (AADCH) on May 3-4, 2022. The annual event offers discussions and webinars as well as opportunities to engage with members of Congress and advocate for people living with asthma and/or allergies. This year, the event will be both virtual and in-person and registration is expected to open in March. For more information, make sure to visit the Asthma & Allergy Network where you can also check out a recap of the 2021 virtual

Stay tuned for more information about local events in recognition of Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month hosted by DOEE in the next digest issue.

event.

— APRIL 4-10, 2022 — PUBLIC HEALTH IS WHERE YOU ARE NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK • The American Public

Health Association has chosen April 4 – 10th, 2022 as National Public Health Week (NPHW). The 2022 NPHW theme is "Public Health is where you are". Where we live impacts our health, and some communities have worse health outcomes because of where they live. Listening and learning from members of these communities is the first step to ensuring that public health is fair for all. Visit the NPHW website for more information, including toolkits and fact sheets.

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