



Lead Update

RI Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

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Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

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Environmental Lead Inspections Conducted by RI Department of Health Staff as of July 2007

As of July 1, 2007, the Rhode Island Department of Health Environmental Lead staff will conduct comprehensive environmental lead inspections for significantly lead poisoned children. Due to the loss of funding for the Environmental Lead Laboratory, analysis of dust and soil samples will be contracted to private laboratories. Field staff will now rely primarily on visual/colorimetric analysis of damaged paint and will direct property owners to private inspectors should they want a more detailed inspection.

The Environmental Health Division, which housed the Environmental Lead unit, was restructured in April of this year. As a result of this restructure, the Environmental Lead Program is now in the Division of Community Health and Equity. This division is comprised of programs that are important partners in the development of a broader healthy housing initiative, including minority health, asthma control, and injury prevention.

Changes in Licensing Fees for Lead Professionals

On May 30, 2007, the RI Department of Health filed the *Rules and Regulations for Lead Poisoning Prevention Regulations* with the RI Secretary of State. The only amendment was a fee increase. The amended regulations are available for viewing or downloading on the Secretary of State's website: www.sec.state.ri.us/rules.

The fee structure now in effect lists the following initial and renewal licensing fees:

- Lead Hazard Reduction Contractors and Environmental Lead Inspectors \$200
- Lead Hazard Reduction Site Supervisors and Environmental Lead Inspector Technicians \$100
- Lead Hazard Reduction Workers \$30
- Lead Safe Remodeler/ Renovators \$40

There are also increases to the Lead Inspector Technician-in-Training and the Training Providers Course Certification.

Healthy Housing Collaborative: a Strong, Statewide Partnership

The Healthy Housing Collaborative was formed in the summer of 2005 with a group of interested partners who began a dialog on how to make Rhode Island a state that provides healthy housing to families and young children. Following initial conversations and suggestions from the group, a partnership was established with the RI Housing Resources Commission and together formulated a plan to conduct an assessment of the goals, objectives, plans, resources, and needs of the state with regards to healthy housing. That assessment was completed in early 2007 and published in the form of a report titled *Healthy Housing: Why Rhode Island should invest in the vision*.

As the Healthy Housing Collaborative began working on the recommendations made in the report, other groups became interested in joining the effort. For example, the Asthma Control Program was in the process of convening a workgroup to discuss long-term strategies to address environmental conditions in the home that trigger asthma attacks. Given the joint goals identified, the Asthma workgroup was merged with the Collaborative. Because the Collaborative is already working on moving the healthy housing agenda, which is the same goal pursued by the Lead Program's Advisory Committee, we recently invited Committee members to merge with the Healthy Housing Collaborative as well.

With the addition of new members, the state now has a comprehensive group of committed partners and agencies working on a joint agenda. While the Healthy Housing Collaborative is a statewide group, the RI Department of Health formed its internal structure under the name of "Healthy Housing Steering Committee" with four members: Peter Simon, Robert Vanderslice, Nancy Sutton, and Magaly Angeloni. The Steering Committee's charge is to promote the healthy housing agenda, continue to facilitate and gather input from statewide partners through the Healthy Housing Collaborative, take leadership on healthy housing strategies, and report to the Director of Health.

Outreach & Education Plan

We have recently posted our revised *Public and Professional Health Education, Health Promotion and Outreach Plan* on our web site:
www.health.ri.gov/lead.

This guide contains the strategies, audiences, and measures behind each of the outreach activities that we conduct here in the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.

We hope that this document informs our partners, advocates, lead programs in other states, and other interested parties about efforts to educate parents, professionals, homeowners, physicians, and others about the dangers of lead poisoning.

Our intention is to update this plan annually. If you have any suggestions or questions about this plan, please feel free to contact us.

Reaching Children Enrolled in WIC

Beginning this month, the Lead Program will be working with the WIC agencies throughout the state to monitor and follow up on children who are enrolled in WIC and have an elevated blood lead level equal to or greater than 10 mcg/dL. We expect to reach those children and provide the necessary nutritional counseling to help reduce their lead levels.

Similarly, WIC agencies will be receiving lists of participating children that have no evidence of a blood lead test and are already 18 months of age. The parents of those children will then be contacted and encouraged to get their child tested during their next doctor's visit.

We are looking forward to this stronger partnership with the WIC program and hope to see positive results in the near future.