



Warren C. Evans
Wayne County Executive

Wayne County
Department of
Health, Veterans &
Community Wellness

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WAYNE COUNTY OFFERING ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS ASSISTANCE TO MAKE THEIR HOMES 'LEADSAFE'

Households with young children or pregnant women can apply through Health Veterans and Community Wellness Department to participate in lead hazard control program

Wayne County, MI— The Wayne County Department of Health, Veterans and Community Wellness (HVCW) is recruiting homeowners and tenants with young children under the age of six or pregnant women to participate in LeadSafe, a hazard control program designed to prevent lead poisoning. With the support of a \$2.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), this program will assist Wayne County homeowners or tenants, in making their homes “lead safe” by reducing lead hazards.

“The goal is to prevent lead exposure to children, particularly with older homes that still contain lead paint that can chip or crumble into dust,” said Carol Austerberry, HVCW Director of Wellness Services and Deputy Health Officer. “You can’t tell if a home is contaminated just by looking at it. The only way to be sure if paint contains lead is to have it tested by a qualified professional, which is exactly what this grant will allow us to do for hundreds of Wayne County families.”

Residents are eligible for lead remediation assistance if:

- Their income meets program eligibility requirements.
- The home or rental property is in Wayne County and built before 1978, is structurally sound, and has a least one bedroom. This excludes homes within the city of Detroit. Homes within the city of Detroit are under the jurisdiction of the Detroit Health Department.
- There are children under six years of age or pregnant women living in the home, or there are visiting young children in the home at least 6 hours per week/10 weeks per year.
- In order to track improvements in blood lead levels after remediation is complete, an initial blood lead level for each child is necessary. Thus, each child under six years of age must have a current blood lead test to be considered. Capillary blood tests can be performed by a family doctor or at the Wayne County Health clinic at 33030 Van Born, Wayne, MI 48174. Children who are WIC recipients may also have a blood test performed at the Family Health Center at 26650 Eureka Road, Taylor, MI 48180.

Lead poisoning is a disease caused by swallowing or breathing lead particles, especially the dust that contains lead. A child can be at risk regardless of where they live or their family’s financial status.

Children under six are the most vulnerable to lead poisoning because their bodies absorb lead easier and their bodies are growing and developing. Lead damages the child's brain and nervous system and its effects are irreversible. Children living in homes built before 1978 are at the greatest risk for exposure. The grant will also support Healthy Homes, a program that addresses other household repairs that compliments the lead services by focusing on other home health safety issues, such as old furnaces that put out carbon monoxide and outdated electrical boxes.

The Healthy Homes inspection is done at the same time as the lead inspection. Residents must be part of the LeadSafe Wayne County program to be eligible for Healthy Homes benefits.

"Children in lower income brackets often face several household hazards besides lead," said Austerberry. "A leaky roof can cause mold which can trigger asthma. A loose stair railing can cause a fall. The Healthy Homes program provides for updates that make homes generally safer for our kids to live in."

Citizens with questions or who need assistance in filling out the application may call 734-727-2215 or 734-727-2216 or visit HVCW between 9:00AM to 4:00 PM Monday – Friday (closed 11:30 am to 12:30pm for lunch). The Wellness Division of the Wayne County Department of Health, Veterans and Community Wellness is located at 33030 Van Born Road, East Wing, Wayne, Michigan 48184.

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