



**HUNTERDON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH SERVICES
Division of Health**

314 State Route 12, Building #1, 2nd Floor
PO Box 2900
Flemington, NJ 08822-2900
908-788-1351
health@co.hunterdon.nj.us

For Immediate Release

Contact: Karen DeMarco, MPH, Health Officer and Epidemiologist

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Division of Health Recognizes National Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 2018

The Hunterdon County Division of Health encourages parents to have their child tested for lead and to renovate their homes safely to prevent childhood lead poisonings, as part of the lead poisoning education program planned for **October 21-27th, National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week.**

Nearly half a million children living in the United States have elevated blood lead levels causing significant damage to their health, estimates the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There is no safe blood lead level in children, and exposure can affect nearly every system in the body. Children with lead poisoning often do not have obvious symptoms, and it frequently goes unrecognized. Major sources of lead exposure to U.S. children include lead-based paint in homes built before 1978, however there are many additional sources including pottery, consumer products, contaminated drinking water, take-home exposures from a workplace, and soil.

Get Your Child Tested

A simple blood test can detect lead. All children should have their blood tested for lead twice before the age of 6. Parents should speak to their pediatrician about blood lead testing or contact the Health Division. If tests reveal that a child's blood contains more than 5 mg/dl, the Hunterdon County Division of Health will investigate the source of lead poisoning for the child. Public health nurses provide case management and health education, and assist the family with medical treatment for the child as needed.

Renovate Safely

Lead can be found inside and outside the home, however the most common source of exposure is from lead-based paint, which was used in many homes built before 1978. Lead exposure is caused by accidentally swallowing or breathing in the lead dust created by old paint that has cracked and chipped. Common renovation, repair, and painting activities that disturb lead-based paint (like sanding, cutting, replacing windows, and more) can create hazardous lead dust and chips which can be harmful to adults and children. Home repairs that create even a small amount of lead dust are enough to poison your child and put your family at risk. There are certain practices that can be used during home renovation that will keep your family safe from lead or hire a lead-safe certified home contractor.

One of the goals of the Hunterdon County Division of Health is to prevent illness in our residents. Childhood lead poisoning prevention is a key focus of the public health nursing and environmental health programs at the county. “The Hunterdon County Division of Health works to ensure that our children are living safely in older homes and are free from exposure to other sources of lead as well,” said Suzanne Lagay, Freeholder.

For more information about childhood lead poisoning prevention, blood lead testing, and safe renovation, visit the Hunterdon County Division of Public Health website at <http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/health.htm> or call 908-788-1351.