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In 2016*, 162,185 children tested for lead poisoning in Ohio

In 2016*, there were 4,591 children with confirmed blood lead levels of 5 μg/dL** or greater

778 notifications for lead abatement projects were received during Federal Fiscal Year 2017

This was 2.83% of the total tested population

1,018 individuals and 318 firms were certified for lead-based paint activities by the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2017

In 2016*, there were 1,303 children with confirmed blood lead levels of 10 μg/dL** or greater

This was 0.80% of the total tested population

*Most recent finalized data available
** micrograms per deciliter
INTRODUCTION

There is no safe level of lead in the body. The primary source of lead exposure in children with elevated lead levels is deteriorated lead-based paint (dust). Other potential lead exposure sources include soil, water, and consumer products.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has administered a comprehensive statewide lead poisoning prevention program since 1991. The Ohio Lead Advisory Council (OLAC) provides the Director of Health with advice regarding the policies the childhood lead poisoning prevention program should emphasize, preferred methods of financing the program, and any other matter relevant to the program’s operation.

ODH’s lead program provides guidelines on lead testing and medical management, educates healthcare providers, conducts surveillance and case management, conducts public health lead investigations (either directly or through local delegated boards of health), licenses the professional workforce, approves lead laboratories, and provides compliance assistance and monitoring. ODH receives funding for lead poisoning prevention from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Ohio Development Services Agency, Ohio Housing Finance Agency and General Revenue Funds.

When a child under six years of age is identified with an elevated blood lead level (lead poisoning), ODH or its delegated authority conducts a public health lead investigation to determine the probable source of lead exposure. If an investigation identifies an existing lead hazard, a Lead Hazard Control Order is issued ordering the property owner to control the lead hazard. If a property owner refuses to control an identified lead hazard, an order to vacate the property is issued, declaring it unsafe for human occupation, especially for children younger than 6 years of age and pregnant women.

In 2017, the ODH Director of Health delegated the authority to conduct public health lead investigations to the following local health jurisdictions in accordance with Ohio Revised Code 3472.34:

- Canton City Health Department (relinquished delegation effective 6-30-2017)
- Cincinnati Health Department
- Cleveland Department of Public Health
- Columbus Public Health
- Cuyahoga County Board of Health
- Erie County General Health District (relinquished delegation effective 6-30-2017)
- Franklin County Public Health
- Hamilton County General Health District
- Lorain County General Health District
- Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County
- Summit County Public Health
- Toledo-Lucas County Health Department
- Zanesville-Muskingum County Health Department

Visit www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead to learn more
OHIO LEAD ADVISORY COUNCIL (OLAC)

The Ohio Lead Advisory Council (OLAC) was established within the Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3742.32. OLAC is tasked with providing the Director of Health with advice regarding the policies the childhood lead poisoning prevention program should emphasize, preferred methods of financing the program, and any other matter relevant to the program’s operation.

The mission of OLAC is to engage all stakeholders in the process of actively working toward the elimination of all sources of lead poisoning in the state. Stakeholders include state agencies, local public health jurisdictions, housing agencies, property owners, health care providers, and advocates for children and lead-safe housing.

OLAC consists of nine appointed members representing the following agencies and organizations:

- Ohio Department of Medicaid
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Bureau of Child Care
- Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
- Ohio Department of Education
- Ohio Development Services Agency
- Ohio Apartment Owners’ Association
- Ohio Healthy Homes Network
- Ohio Environmental Health Association
- Ohio representative of the American Coatings Association

OLAC meets quarterly and works on activities focused on eliminating childhood lead poisoning as a public health issue. In 2017, the group met on February 23, May 25, July 27 and October 5.

Pursuant to the bylaws, OLAC has two elected positions. The 2017 Chairperson was Patricia Barnes, Ohio Healthy Homes Network’s (OHHN) representative, and Vice Chairperson was Joshua Niese, Ohio Environmental Health Association’s (OEHA) representative. At the last quarterly meeting of the calendar year (October 5), elections were held for 2018, and OEHA representative Joshua Niese was elected Chairperson, and OHHN representative Patricia Barnes was elected Vice Chairperson.
2017 Key Accomplishments

- Continued working with ODH’s delegated local health departments to strengthen efforts to investigate and close child lead poisoning cases and ensure that Ohio’s children are not living in housing with known lead hazards:

  - Updated the Public Health Lead Investigation Manual in the summer of 2017. The manual provides guidance and requirements for conducting investigations of children with elevated blood lead levels. A key update requires public health lead investigators to pursue additional avenues when attempting to locate a lead-poisoned child who has moved from a property subject to investigation. The updated guidance requires six unique contact attempts utilizing various government and medical resources to find accurate contact information for the child’s parents or guardian. These resources include the child’s primary healthcare provider who ordered the blood lead test, as well as any local Women Infant and Children’s (WIC) program, Home Visiting program, Children with Medical Handicaps program, immunization program, dental clinics, and boards of education.

  - Enhanced the monitoring of properties with identified lead hazards to ensure that known lead hazards are controlled in a timely manner. If lead hazards are not controlled within prescribed timelines, a property must be placarded and vacated per Ohio law. ODH initiated publication of Ohio properties under an order to vacate available on its website in the Ohio Public Health Data Warehouse. The list is updated daily and available at http://publicapps.odh.ohio.gov/EDW/DataBrowser/Browse/LeadHazardousProperties.

  - Expanded the definition of a “public health lead investigator” to assist delegated local boards of health with recruiting and hiring qualified public health lead investigators. The previous regulation required an individual who conducts a public health lead investigation to be licensed as a lead risk assessor in Ohio and be a registered sanitarian or sanitarian-in-training. The revised rule still requires an individual to be licensed as a lead risk assessor, but he or she may take a course prescribed by the Director of Health and complete a 40-hour internship in lieu of being a registered sanitarian or sanitarian-in-training. The revised rule also allows an individual who is a registered nurse or a certified health education specialist and has attended ODH case management training to conduct public health lead investigations for children under six years of age whose blood lead level is between 5 µg/dL and less than 10 µg/dL.

- Launched a project to make blood lead testing data available in the Ohio Public Health Data Warehouse on the ODH website (http://publicapps.odh.ohio.gov/EDW/DataCatalog).
Collaborated with the State Medical Board of Ohio to continue promoting an instructional video for physicians on “Ohio Child Lead Testing Requirements.” Ohio law requires primary care providers to order a blood lead screening test for any child under six years old who is determined to be at risk of lead exposure based on their ZIP Code. The law also requires that a blood lead screening test be performed on all Medicaid-enrolled children at ages 1 and 2, and up to age 6 if a child is found not to have received a previous test. The video informs the medical profession on these requirements and provides recommendations on the medical management of child lead poisoning. The video is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qby_9Wh9VcI&feature=youtu.be.

Partnered with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to comply with a new state law effective September 2016 requiring public water systems to produce maps available to the public showing pipes containing lead in their water distribution systems. The new law applied to community water systems that serve the same population year-round (e.g., a municipal water system), and to non-community, non-transient water systems that serve at least 25 of the same people at least six months per year (e.g., schools, factories, office buildings and hospitals which have their own water systems). The public water systems were required to identify and map areas that are known to contain, or likely to contain, lead service lines by March 9, 2017. Community water systems were required to identify and provide a description of the characteristics of buildings they serve that may contain lead solder, fixtures or pipes. Non-community, non-transient water systems were required to map areas of the system that have solder, fixtures and pipes containing lead. Maps were received from all 1,851 public water systems in Ohio, and they are posted on the Ohio EPA website at http://www.epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/pws/leadandcopper/map.aspx.

Promoted April’s Healthy Homes Awareness Month (HHAM). The purpose of HHAM is to raise awareness about health hazards linked to the home environment such as lead poisoning. During HHAM 2017, ODH awarded 15 local health jurisdictions up to $10,000 each to increase public awareness about lead poisoning prevention and the tenants of a healthy home (Keep It: Dry, Clean, Safe, Well-Ventilated, Pest Free, Contaminant Free and Well Maintained). The majority of HHAM activities focused on public outreach through billboards, banners, radio, television, digital advertising, social media and local public transportation advertising to disseminate educational messages.
about lead poisoning prevention and healthy homes. Several local health jurisdictions also pursued in-person outreach, which included attending health fairs, hosting trainings, hosting community meetings, providing materials to daycare centers and WIC clinics, and visiting physicians’ offices.

- Increased public awareness about the dangers of lead exposure and the importance of child blood lead testing through a public awareness campaign targeting parents and guardians of children most at risk for lead exposure living in high-risk ZIP Codes. The campaign utilized billboards, transit and radio advertising, and ran from mid-September through the end of November, including a heavy rotation during National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (October 22-28, 2017).

- Received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support childhood lead surveillance and other lead poisoning prevention and educational activities. CDC awarded $406,472 for the project period from September 30, 2016 – September 29, 2017 and $406,472 from Sep. 30, 2017 – Sept. 29, 2018.

- Continued work on the $3,231,610 Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control grant that was awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for grant period November 2, 2015 – November 1, 2018. The Ohio Development Services Agency’s Housing Trust Fund has dedicated $100,000 and the Ohio Housing Finance Agency has dedicated $200,000 to serve as match funds for the grant. During 2017, 77 homes were made lead-safe for a total of 119 homes since the grant started.

- Collaborated with Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) to start a statewide lead abatement project. In December 2018, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services approved a State Plan Amendment that permits Ohio to implement a health services initiative utilizing State Children’s Health Insurance (SCHIP) funds to provide lead abatement services in the homes of low-income children and pregnant women. ODH and ODM will prioritize services to property owners and families whose properties are subject to lead hazard control orders issued by ODH or one of its delegated boards of health. These prioritized properties have undergone a thorough lead investigation and lead risk assessment which has identified hazards contributing to an eligible child’s elevated blood lead level of 10 micrograms/deciliter or higher.

- Began developing an online lead-safe rental housing registry in collaboration with the Ohio Housing Finance Agency and its existing Ohio Housing Locator website (https://www.ohiohousinglocator.org/). The rental locator can be used to search for affordable and accessible rental housing located throughout Ohio. “Lead-safe” will be added to the rental locator’s existing filtering criteria. In order for a rental unit to be listed as “lead-safe” in the rental locator, property owners must demonstrate that lead-safe maintenance practices and dust sampling are performed by an individual who has successfully completed a training program approved by ODH.
• Awarded a grant for $767,564 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to administer and enforce its authorized lead accreditation and certification program. The grant period is for Federal Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018 (Oct. 1, 2016 – Sept. 30, 2018). ODH received 778 original lead abatement project notifications and conducted 202 on-site inspections of such projects during the first year of the grant. There were 1,018 individuals and 318 firms certified by ODH for lead-based paint activities at the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2017.

• Awarded a $56,874 grant (Oct. 1, 2016 – Jan. 31, 2018) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to hold lead training for socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and businesses. The grant provided an opportunity to increase workforce capacity to complete lead abatement work. ODH collaborated with the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development and local workforce development and community action agencies to hold five Lead Abatement Contractor Initial Training courses in Canton, Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton and Toledo. Fifty-five individuals completed the training and are eligible to pursue licensure in the lead abatement field.
2016 OHIO CHILDHOOD LEAD TESTING STATISTICS

In 2016 (the most recent finalized data available), 162,185 Ohio children under age 6 received a blood lead screening test, a 3.9 percent increase compared to the 156,135 children tested in 2015. The distribution of tests by blood lead level is depicted in Table 1. Ohio’s threshold for an elevated blood lead level was updated in November 2014 from 10 micrograms per deciliter (μg/dL) to 5 μg/dL based on new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Council on Lead Poisoning Prevention. All blood lead levels at or above this threshold are now considered to be elevated blood lead levels. In 2016, there were 1,303 Ohio children with confirmed blood lead levels of 10 μg/dL or greater (0.80% of the total tested population), and 4,591 children with confirmed blood lead levels of 5 μg/dL or greater (2.83% of the total tested population). This 2016 data represents a slight increase in the number of children with confirmed elevated blood lead levels compared to 2015 data. However, there was a significant decrease in the number of children with unconfirmed elevated blood lead levels, from 2,550 in 2015 to 1,848 in 2016. This indicates that more children received appropriate follow-up lead testing in 2016, which enabled more children to receive appropriate case management services.

All data obtained for the statistics on the following pages were obtained from the Healthy Housing and Lead Poisoning Surveillance System (HHLPPSS) at ODH.


Starting in November 2014, the State of Ohio required that all screening blood lead levels of 5 μg/dL or greater be confirmed by a venous blood draw, consistent with the new definition of an elevated blood lead level and the body of scientific literature demonstrating adverse health effects at lower blood lead levels. This new definition significantly increases the prevalence of children considered to be lead poisoned in Ohio.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Ohio</th>
<th>Total Children Tested</th>
<th>0-4 μg/dL</th>
<th>5-9 μg/dL</th>
<th>10-44 μg/dL</th>
<th>≥45 μg/dL</th>
<th>Total ≥5 μg/dL</th>
<th>% Tested with ≥5 μg/dL</th>
<th>Total ≥10 μg/dL</th>
<th>% Tested with ≥10 μg/dL</th>
<th>5-9 μg/dL</th>
<th>≥10 μg/dL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>162,185</td>
<td>155,746</td>
<td>3,288</td>
<td>1,275</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4,591</td>
<td>2.83%</td>
<td>1,303</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>1603</td>
<td>245</td>
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i. The table above contains data for children less than 72 months (6 years) of age at the time of test.
ii. Blood lead levels reflect the highest confirmed test if a confirmed test exists for the child or the highest test for the year otherwise.
iii. Unconfirmed blood lead levels are defined as tests for children who had a capillary test of 5 μg/dL or greater and did not receive a confirmatory test.
The prevalence of confirmed blood lead levels ≥10 µg/dL is a measure of the proportion of children tested less than 6 years of age who were identified to have confirmed blood lead levels ≥10 µg/dL in a calendar year. The figure shows a decline in the prevalence of children with blood lead levels ≥10 µg/dL from 8.7 percent in 1999 to approximately 0.8 percent in 2016. The observed prevalence of confirmed blood lead levels ≥10 µg/dL has remained consistent since 2013.
Note: Children tested for lead more than once in a calendar year were counted only once. Only the highest confirmed blood lead level was used for a child during the year if a confirmed test existed, or the highest test for the year otherwise.