

# FUNDING RENEWED FOR SUCCESSFUL CITY-COUNTY LEAD PREVENTION EFFORTS

**Poughkeepsie** ... Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro and City of Poughkeepsie Mayor John Tkazyik announced today the County and City will continue its successful Lead Primary Prevention Program with \$100,000 in renewed funding from the New York State Department of Health. The Dutchess County Legislature unanimously authorized the intermunicipal agreement between the City and the County at its Board Meeting on Monday night.

“Lead poisoning is one of the most preventable environmental health problems facing children today. We are pleased to continue our partnership with the City of Poughkeepsie to focus on potentially dangerous lead levels in the City’s high risk neighborhoods,” said County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro.

City of Poughkeepsie homes in the 12601 zip code have been identified by the NYS Department of Health as having the highest annual incidence of Elevated Blood Lead Levels (EBLL) in Dutchess County, since many of the homes were built before 1970 when paint and household plumbing were often made with lead materials. Through the Lead Primary Prevention Program, City of Poughkeepsie inspectors conduct housing unit inspections and identify units with potential lead based paint hazards. Property owners are then referred to the Dutchess County Department of Health for training in the U.S. EPA’s Lead Safety for Remodeling, Repair and Painting (RPR) Course. Public Health Nurses are available to provide individual case management and follow up to children with elevated blood lead levels.

City of Poughkeepsie Mayor Tkazyik said, “Through this program, we have conducted more than 700 inspections, identifying lead based hazards in more than 370 homes. We have worked with property owners to remove lead hazards from housing units where children were at risk and more than 400 people have received Lead Safe Renovation Training. This has been a very successful collaborative effort with the County.”

“Children with elevated blood lead levels can experience significant health impacts,” said Dutchess County Commissioner of Health Dr. Michael

Caldwell. “Children are more vulnerable to lead poisoning than adults. Even minor exposures to lead can cause nervous system disorders, lowered IQ’s, impaired memory and reaction times, and shortened attention spans. The Lead Primary Prevention Program is an important component of our lead exposure prevention efforts.”

The Dutchess County Department of Health offers the following recommendations and precautions to protect children from lead poisoning:

- All children should be tested for lead at ages one and two.
- Homes built before 1978 may contain lead paint or household plumbing made with lead materials.
- Clean floors, window frames, window sills and other surfaces at least weekly. Use a mop, sponge or paper towel with warm water and a general all-purpose cleaner.
- Don’t try to remove lead paint yourself, because you risk creating lead dust and chips. Consider hiring a professional contractor with experience in working safely with lead removal.
- Be sure children wash their hands before eating, after playing outside and at bedtime.
- Don’t bring lead dust into the home. If you are exposed to lead at work, change your clothes and shower, if possible, before you go home. Wash work clothes separately.

Parents and caregivers are advised to see their health care providers if they have concerns about exposure to lead. For more information about the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, contact the Dutchess County Department of Health at [\(845\) 486-3419](tel:8454863419).

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