

MARYLAND LEAD POISONING PREVENTION COMMISSION

February 3, 2022

The Honorable Larry Hogan
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President
Senate of Maryland
State House, H-107
Annapolis Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker
Maryland House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Hogan, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

On behalf of the Maryland Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission (Commission), please accept this letter as the Commission's Annual Report for CY21, as required by Environment Article, § 6-810(c), *Annotated Code of Maryland*. The Commission's monthly agendas and minutes can be found at the links listed below.

- **Agendas:** mde.maryland.gov/programs/LAND/LeadPoisoningPrevention/Pages/Lead-Meeting-Agenda.aspx
- **Minutes:** mde.maryland.gov/programs/LAND/LeadPoisoningPrevention/Pages/LPPMeetingMinutes.aspx

The Commission, established under Environment Article Title 6, Subtitle 8, advises the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the legislature, and the Governor regarding lead poisoning prevention in Maryland, and specifically the Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing Law. During 2021, the Commission considered and reviewed the following:

- Legislation during the 2021 session including, HB 49, which did not pass, but would have required a rental owner to provide documentation of compliance with local registration/licensing laws in addition to the state lead law in all failure to pay rent actions and HB 636 (Ch. 237), which did pass and amended the definition of "elevated level of lead" in drinking water to mean a lead concentration in drinking water that exceeds 5 parts per billion (ppb) for purposes of certain provisions of law requiring the periodic testing for the presence of lead in drinking water outlets. The bill also marked changes to the existing notice and remediation requirements for an "elevated level of lead" in drinking water.
- Lead Case Management Guidelines that incorporated the lower blood lead Reference Level of 5 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) and later reviewed the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that further reduced the blood Reference Level of lead to 3.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$. This

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review later resulted in the establishment of a new subcommittee to address implementation of the new lower Reference Level.

- Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on lead testing that decreased significantly in CY20 and developed strategies to address this decline.
- Strategies to promote 2021 Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (in October).
- Findings on Environmental Case Management for CY19 presented by MDE. The presentation was a comprehensive overview of medical and environmental case management for all new lead exposures among children 0-72 months of age for CY19.
- Curriculum for Continued Medical Education credits for health care providers offered by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), Titled, “Lead, Asthma, Radon and Healthy Homes in Maryland: New Resources for Clinicians and Patients.” The course included information for health care providers to:
 - Identify the changes in Maryland laws and regulations that reduce the blood lead level in a child that will trigger a response from state agencies.
 - Understand the recent trends in the state for lead levels and blood lead testing rates.
 - Identify and access services for home-based pediatric environmental health hazards including lead, asthma, and radon.
 - Quickly identify patient needs for services related to home-based environmental health hazards.
- Report by the U.S. House Oversight Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy titled, “Baby Foods Are Tainted with Dangerous Levels of Arsenic, Lead, Cadmium, and Mercury”.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) field office collaborations with state and local agencies and a new HUD grant opportunity.
- Updates on the testing of lead in drinking water at schools, including a discussion of the definition of drinking water outlets.
- Presentation on a web-based story of housing and lead in Baltimore, presented by the University of Maryland School of Public Health.
- Baltimore County Lead Safe Recent HUD award information and breaking down the \$2 million in funds awarded to the agency for the next three years. The agency plans to use the funds to remediate 93 homes/rentals and test 100 homes for lead-based paint or dust.
- Agency presentations on the following subjects:
 - MDE - Compliance and Enforcement and Preliminary data on Childhood Lead Registry (CY19 Childhood Lead Surveillance in Maryland Report).
 - Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development - Lead Hazard Reduction Grant/Loan Programs data.
 - MDE Water Supply Program - Amended regulations and funding to Child Care Centers; and
 - Maryland Department of Education Office of Child Care - Grants for childcare centers to address lead in water.

Based upon the Commission's study of these topics, it took the following actions and made the following recommendations:

- Completed specific impactful actions and strategic planning, and event goals identified in the Gap Analysis performed in 2021 as follows:

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- Blood Lead Testing and Case Management Actions:
 - Continued Medical Education credits for providers and healthcare workers sponsored by the Maryland Chapter of the Academy of Pediatrics were offered by MDH with support from the Green and Health Homes Initiative.
 - Established consistency of Case Management across the state. MDH finalized and disseminated new medical case management guidelines to healthcare providers and case management specialists in Maryland for the lead Reference Level, currently at 5µg/dL.
- Environmental Investigation and Enforcement:
 - New regulations have been established for environmental case management in Maryland. A presentation was made on these regulations to the Commission on Feb. 4, 2021.
- Looked at case management data, develop priorities based on prevention - individual effects:
 - Used data collected from CDC supplemental grants to identify specific areas/ effects to determine priorities.
 - Populated database/central repository of findings: added compliance, built date, outcomes—Blood Lead Level reductions, ensured safety in abatement and remediation.
- Created a subcommittee for lead testing and evaluated data provided by MDE.
 - The subcommittee created parent and healthcare provider letters, which will be sent to the county environmental and health officers, local health departments, and all private healthcare providers statewide.
- Reviewed and provided input for a Lead Week Proclamation. Discussed best practices for reaching targeted audiences, in-light of COVID-19, during lead week. Social media campaigns resulted, with public and private membership partners.

We appreciate the opportunity to update you on the Commission's work over the past year. We look forward to continuing our work in 2022 to further the Commission's vision of a Maryland in which all children are free from the harmful effects of lead exposure.

Sincerely,

Paula T. Montgomery

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MDE Representative
Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission