

Lead in Soil from Historic Pottery Sites in Trenton

New Jersey Department of Health's (NJDOH) Information and Guidance for Residents

The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide residents with information and guidance to help protect themselves and their families from exposures to lead in soil as the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues with its ongoing investigation of historic pottery sites in Trenton.

What is EPA's investigation and how can I learn more about it?

EPA has been evaluating properties in Trenton where pottery manufacturing took place during the 1850s to 1930s to determine if soil on nearby properties is contaminated with lead from former pottery manufacturing facilities. EPA is currently conducting soil sampling in the Top Road and East Trenton neighborhoods and will be expanding its investigation into other areas over the next several months. For detailed information and ongoing updates from EPA, please visit: bit.ly/EPAInvestigationTrentonPotteries.

How will I know if the soil on my property is impacted?

EPA has been conducting soil sampling for potentially impacted properties identified during this evaluation and plans to sample additional properties. Until you know whether your soil is impacted, there are actions you can take to protect you and your family from potential exposures to lead in soil.

What actions can I take to protect myself and my family from lead contaminated soil?

Children are at a greater risk for exposure to lead in soil because they are more likely to have contact with or play in the dirt. Young children are especially at risk because they may put their hands or other objects that may be contaminated with lead dust into their mouths. There are steps you can take to reduce exposures from lead contaminated soil and dust such as the following:

- Washing hands frequently especially before eating, drinking, and after gardening;
- Removing shoes, coats, and outerwear when coming into your home;
- Cleaning your home weekly using wet mops/cloths with soap and water to keep it as dust free as possible;
- Vacuuming carpeted areas before mopping uncarpeted floors; and
- Bathing your pets frequently.

For more information on ways to reduce exposures to lead in soil, please see attached NJDOH Fact sheet at bit.ly/NJDOHLeadInSoil and see the EPA Infographic at bit.ly/EPAInfographicLead. Spanish versions are available at bit.ly/NJDOHLeadInSoil_sp and at bit.ly/EPAInfographicLead_sp.

What are some other ways that people can be exposed to lead?

People are exposed to lead by swallowing or inhaling it. Lead can be found in:

- Paint found in homes built before 1978;
- Imported consumer products such as cosmetics, spices, cultural home remedies, pottery, and toys;
- Take-home lead from hobbies and occupations;
- Water pumped through leaded pipes; and
- Contaminated soil and air.

Why is lead exposure a particular concern for children?

Children are more susceptible than adults to the harmful effects of lead. Children from birth to less than 6 years of age are most at-risk of developing health effects from lead. Pregnant women are also at an increased risk as exposure to lead can adversely affect the developing fetus. Lead is most impactful to children under the age of 6 years, especially in the first three years of life. Lead affects the developing brain and nervous system. In children, exposure to lead can result in lowered intelligence, hyperactivity, attention deficits, developmental problems, and decreased hearing.

In general, how can I prevent exposure to lead?

For information on how to prevent childhood lead exposure, please visit bit.ly/NJDOHPreventingLeadPoisoning. Some key steps::

- Wash your child's hands frequently before eating, after playing outside or on the floor, and before sleeping;
- Wash toys, bottles, pacifiers, and other objects that children handle and put in their mouths,
- Leave shoes at the entrance to your home;
- Feed your child healthy foods high in iron and calcium;
- Store foods and liquids in lead-free containers;
- Clean floors and windowsills using a damp mop or sponge and detergent;
- Know if your home has lead-based paint before doing renovations or remodeling;
- Use lead-safe work practices or hire a Certified Renovator for homes built before 1978;
- Use only cold tap water to prepare formula, for drinking and cooking;
- Run water for 15 to 30 seconds before drinking; and
- Wash work clothes separately if a job uses lead.

What can I do if I am concerned about lead exposures?

If you are concerned about exposure to lead, talk to your health care provider or your child's health care provider. Health care providers may offer blood lead testing in the office or give you a prescription to go to a laboratory. If your child does not have health insurance or the insurance does not cover lead testing, free testing is available from the Trenton Department of Health and Human Services. If you do not have health insurance, please visit bit.ly/FedQualHealthCenters to find your closest Federally Qualified Health Center.