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Alliance Offers Lead-Safe Remodeling and Renovation Train-the-Trainer Program

Do you want to make sure there is capacity in your community to implement the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) lead-safe renovation, repair, and painting (RRP) rule? Are you looking for an income stream for your organization? Consider becoming an accredited trainer to teach contractors how to use lead-safe work practices in accordance with the new RRP rule!

In order to comply with the renovation, repair, and painting rule, most contractors who disturb paint in pre-1978 buildings will need to take an eight-hour class from an accredited trainer. More than 200,000 individuals will need to be trained by April 2010, and there will be a huge demand for local deliveries of the eight-hour class. The Alliance for Healthy Homes firmly believes that in order to successfully implement the rule, we need local housing organizations, tenants' organizations, advocacy groups, health departments, and others to step up and help meet the training demand. The RRP classes can be offered for a fee, providing a new income stream or complementing existing training efforts.

To help increase the number of trainers available, the Alliance is developing a "train-the-trainer" program for organizations interested in becoming accredited trainers under the EPA rule. This program will cover: the requirements established by the EPA to become an accredited trainer and how to meet them, how to market the training and recruit participants, and a review of the model curriculum, along with hints on how to best deliver it, with a special emphasis on hands-on materials. The program draws upon the Alliance's experience in helping organizations across the country develop lead-safe work practice training programs.

Students are invited to attend trainings currently scheduled:

- January 21 and 22: Trenton, New Jersey (hosted by Isles, Inc.)
- February 16 and 17: Atlanta, Georgia (in partnership with the NeighborWorks Training Institute)

Additionally, those attending the NeighborWorks Training Institute next month in Washington, DC as well as those in the area are invited to attend a free hour and a half workshop on the RRP rule and an overview of the training accreditation requirements from 4:30 to 6PM on Tuesday, December 9th.

The Alliance hopes to schedule additional trainings over the next several months. If you are interested in training in your area, would like to register for the scheduled classes, or have any other questions, contact Patrick MacRoy, the Alliance's Executive Director, at pmacroy@afhh.org.

Research Lays Out Harms from “Bug Bombs”; NY State Moves to Restrict Use

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recently published the results of a study on “bug bombs,” also known as foggers, which are popular pest management tools in apartments and single-family homes.

The agency’s *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* for Oct. 17 noted that, while bug bombs are a common method of attempting to deal with pests, they often cause injuries. With reports from eight states, researchers found 466 injuries associated with the foggers between 2001 and 2006. Eighty-five percent of the reports occurred with residential usage, and many exposures (48 percent) were blamed on residents being unable to leave the area quickly enough, not leaving the area at all, or re-entering too soon. Eleven percent were associated with unintentional discharge of the bug bombs, and 10 percent with “failure to notify others” such as neighbors. Respiratory and gastrointestinal symptoms were most frequently noted as a result of exposure to the bug bombs.

The MMWR report notes, “Greater efforts are needed to promote safer alternatives to [bug bombs]. Integrated pest management (IPM) control strategies need to be promoted and adopted.” In fact, bug bombs and other forms of fogging and widespread spraying are among the least effective pest control methods available to deal with cockroaches and other insects. While the devices will kill insects that are too slow or sick to flee, most strong, healthy individuals will scatter and hide beyond the reach of the pesticide fog or spray. When the pesticide disperses, these insects return. Repeated use of many pesticides also works to build up resistance in many insect pests, especially those that breed many times a year and evolve rapidly.

In light of the MMWR report, the State of New York announced Oct. 17 that it was restricting the sale and use of bug bombs. The state’s Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will move to classify foggers as a restricted-use product, meaning that only certified pesticide applicators — rather than the general public — will be able to obtain them. Simultaneously, DEC will explore the need to further limit fogger use and encourage the adoption of better pest management strategies.

Instead of bug bombs and blanket spraying, property owners and residents should instead practice IPM. This involves a variety of measures, from physically sealing and blocking pest entryways, eliminating food waste and clutter, repairing water leaks and other sources of moisture used by pest species, and the targeted use of lower-toxicity pesticides.

Click here for the [full text of the MMWR report](#) and NY DEC’s [press release announcing restrictions on the bombs](#). More information on IPM can be found on the [Alliance website](#) and at www.beyondpesticides.org.

EPA Finalizes Ambient Air Standards for Lead; Evidence Emerges of OMB Meddling

Editor’s note: This article is based on a piece that originally appeared in the Oct. 21 edition of The OMB Watcher, the biweekly online newsletter of nonprofit government watchdog group OMB Watch. The full text of the original OMB Watch article is available at www.ombwatch.org/article/articleview/4390.

On Oct. 16, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) tightened the national public health standard for airborne lead, drawing rare praise from clean air advocates. However, shortcomings in the network for monitoring lead pollution persist, and a new requirement to increase the number of pollution detectors was watered down by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

EPA’s new ambient air standard for lead brought the exposure level down to 0.15 µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic meter), from 1.5 µg/m³. The adjustment marked the first time EPA had revised the standard since it was first set in 1978. The review and adjustment of the standards under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards program were prompted by a lawsuit filed by clean air advocates and other environmentalists over dangerous

pollution from a lead smelter in Missouri.

Advocates who have often found fault with President Bush's clean air regulations complemented the decision to finalize a stricter rule on lead. The Natural Resources Defense Council called it a "big step toward protecting children." Critics of the Bush administration's record on science-based policy were also pleased. In setting the standard, EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson took the advice of his scientific advisors, who had recommended a standard below 0.20 µg/m³.

Despite the praise for resisting industry pressure and setting a strong new standard, some dispute EPA's method for calculating the level of lead in the air. EPA will continue to average air concentrations over a calendar quarter. EPA's scientific advisors had recommended the agency average concentrations every month. A one-month averaging time would better account for big spikes in emissions. Conversely, under the three-month method, two months of low emissions could attenuate emissions spikes in the third month.

To address concerns that EPA's system for monitoring airborne lead pollution is inadequate, the agency announced an expansion of its monitoring network. However, officials at OMB watered down a new requirement, which could allow more than 100 polluting facilities to go unmonitored.

Critics say the Bush administration has allowed the national system for detecting airborne lead to founder. Currently, state and local authorities operate 133 monitors nationwide, according to an EPA spokesperson. In 1980, 800 monitors were in operation. EPA used its revision to the air quality standard for lead to set criteria for the placement or relocation of new monitors. EPA estimates the new criteria will require an additional 236 monitors.

One criterion that triggers the placement of monitors is the amount of lead pollution emitted by industrial facilities. The new regulation requires state and local officials to set up monitors near sources emitting one ton or more of lead pollution per year. In a public proposal EPA unveiled in May, the agency signaled its intent to set the threshold between 200 kg and 600 kg (about 0.22 tons and 0.66 tons). An OMB Watch investigation of EPA's rulemaking docket discovered documents that indicate officials from OMB pushed for the weaker threshold requirement.

The change from a 0.5-ton threshold to a one-ton threshold could have real consequences. EPA estimates the one-ton threshold will apply to 135 facilities. However, the 0.5-ton threshold would have applied to at least 259 facilities. The change means state and local officials will not be required to place new lead pollution monitors near at least 124 facilities that emit lead.

Visit the EPA website for more information on the [new ambient air standard for lead](#). To learn more about the dangers of lead exposure, see www.afhh.org/hhe/hhe_lead.htm.

Cornell, New York State Release New Guidelines for Preventing Bed Bugs in Group Living Facilities

Cornell University and the New York State Integrated Pest Management Program have released [new guidance on preventing bed bugs in group living facilities](#). The new guidelines are timely, as bed bugs have made a resurgence in a variety of housing, both temporary (hotels, shelters) and more permanent (college residence halls, some apartment buildings).

The guidelines cover bed bug prevention, management and control, education and awareness, and are specifically geared toward public agencies and private or public housing administrators and their facilities management teams. It is applicable to other types of living situations, though techniques and recommendations may need to be adapted for different types of housing. Fact sheets listed at the end of the publication are intended to be used as stand-alone educational document for residents, housekeepers, medical and social service providers, and others.

NCHH Updates Comparison of Green Building Guidelines for Healthfulness



The National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH) has published an update of its 2006 report, *Comparing Green Building Guidelines and Healthy Homes Principles: A Preliminary Investigation*, that compared major national green building and indoor air quality guidelines with reference to criteria related to keeping homes dry, clean, ventilated, safe, contaminant-free, pest-free, and well-maintained. The report also examined building products and systems for testing ventilation and radon exposure. The analysis examined building guidelines produced by both the public and private sectors, including: Enterprise Community Partner's Green Communities Criteria, National Association of Home Builder's Green Home Building Guidelines, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star with Indoor Air Package, and the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED for Homes.

Enterprise Community Partners' program ranked highest overall, largely because it includes many mandatory indoor criteria, the report says. The National Association of Home Builders ranked the lowest, because it has a minimal set of mandatory standards. The report concludes that while all the programs have components aimed at improving resident health, critical elements are missing. For example, injury prevention is omitted from all of the guidelines and protection from contaminants such as lead, radon, and pesticides are not uniformly covered. Only Enterprise's Green Communities focuses on affordable existing housing, an important consideration since low-income families are disproportionately impacted by housing-related health problems. The analysis does suggest that green building programs offer a significant opportunity to achieve public health benefits and have the potential to transform the housing market toward healthier building. The report recommends ways to strengthen occupant health criteria for green building programs to deliver even greater benefits to residents.

The report is available at www.nchh.org/Green_Analysis_2008.pdf.

New York Governor Vetoes Lead Poisoning Prevention Bill, Cites Poor Economy

Gov. David Paterson (D) recently vetoed a New York State bill to provide tax credits to landowners to rid their properties of lead hazards and reduce the risk of young children becoming lead poisoned. Lead poisoning prevention advocates who supported and fought hard for the bill decried the move.

The legislation was originally introduced by two state legislators from the Rochester area, Sen. Joseph Robach (D) and Assemblyman David Gantt (D). It would have shifted the state's focus away from identifying and reacting to lead poisonings and toward preventing them. Similar versions of the bill have been proposed for years but have never made it to the governor's desk. Advocates said that the bill's passage marked real progress and were excited about implementation of what was to be a groundbreaking new law.

This bill would have required the state to develop lead poisoning prevention plans for 30 lead "hot spots," including parts of Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo. Under the legislation, homeowners and landlords who participated in the new prevention program would have received tax credits to cover half the costs of removing and repairing lead hazards in their properties. Credits would have maxed out at \$1,500 per property and \$5,000 per taxpayer. The bill also would have improved lead poisoning screenings for one- and two-year-olds, as well as pregnant women and all children under the age of six who are considered at risk.

The governor stated that it was the most difficult legislation that he has vetoed thus far and cited the state's budget problems, which are the result of the ongoing economic decline throughout the country. Paterson also asserted that other similar laws on the books already address problems that portions of the bill sought to solve. He pledged to use existing laws to better address

lead poisoning and include new funding in his next executive budget, due Dec. 18.

The Alliance for Healthy Homes, a strong supporter of the New York bill that supported the efforts of local and state advocates, expressed its strong disappointment with Paterson's decision. "New York State is number one in confirmed cases of lead poisoning, yet it currently has some of the least protective policies in the country," said Patrick MacRoy, Executive Director of the Alliance. "The costs of this bill are dwarfed by the long-term benefits, both in terms of reduced health care costs and preventing learning disabilities and intelligence loss among New York children. This veto represents the triumph of politics over sensible policy."

HUD Announces Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Housing Grants

On October 15, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded more than \$131 million in grants to 61 local projects to conduct a wide range of activities, from eliminating lead hazards in homes to increasing public awareness about childhood lead poisoning, from addressing pest problems to examining wide-ranging healthy homes issues.

Through its seven grant programs (Lead Hazard Control, Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration Grants, Lead Outreach Grants, Lead Technical Studies, Operation Lead Elimination Action Program (LEAP), Healthy Homes Demonstration Grants, and Healthy Homes Technical Studies Grants), HUD's Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control promotes local efforts to eliminate dangerous lead and other hazards from lower income homes; stimulates private sector investment in lead hazard control; educates the public about the dangers of lead-based paint; and supports scientific research into innovative methods to identify and eliminate health hazards in housing.

Visit the HUD website for a full breakdown of the [total amounts awarded through each of the seven grants programs](#), as well as complete [project summaries](#).

New GAO Report Urges Improved Federal Agency Coordination on Mold Research and Education

A report published Sept. 30 by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) concluded that "[w]hile the current research activities on indoor mold conducted or sponsored by EPA, HHS, and HUD address identified health-related research gaps to varying degrees, these activities are largely uncoordinated within and across agencies, and many are generated by independent researchers rather than by agency solicitations for specific research." The report goes on to say that poor coordination contributes to the lack of standardized, quantitative methods for measuring exposure to mold, impeding knowledge about health effects and causing unnecessary duplication of research.

The report also noted that the Institute of Medicine failed to associate a number of adverse health effects with mold exposure because the available studies were of "insufficient quality, consistency, or statistical power to permit a conclusion regarding the presence of an association." The GAO report found that federal guidance documents about mold provide generally useful information, but some documents fail to "advise the general public about some potentially serious health effects, and others provide inconsistent information about cleaning agents and appropriate protective gear."

The report specifically criticizes the Federal Interagency Committee on Indoor Air Quality for largely failing to adequately coordinate federal indoor air quality research and foster information sharing among federal agencies and the public, and recommends that EPA use the Committee to help articulate and guide research priorities on indoor mold, coordinate information sharing among agencies, and provide information to the public about ongoing research. The report also recommends that the Committee help federal agencies review

their existing guidance to the public on indoor mold to ensure that it sufficiently alerts the public, especially vulnerable populations, about potential adverse health effects and educates them on how to minimize exposure in homes.

The report is available at www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-08-980.

New Report Issued on Maryland's Children and the Environment

On Oct. 23, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene released a new report entitled **Maryland's Children and the Environment**. According to the agency, the report "is Maryland's first effort to synthesize data to provide a coherent picture of Maryland's children and the environment. The emphasis of the report is to provide the public, policy makers, researchers, and public health officials with measures that can be used to gauge Maryland's progress to improve the environment and reduce the rates of environmentally-related health conditions in children."

The report, which includes sections on lead exposure, pesticides, respiratory diseases, and indoor pollutants, was funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ALLIANCE NEWS

In the Oct. 15 round of HUD's lead hazard control and healthy homes grants, the Alliance was awarded a Healthy Homes Technical Studies grant for a project to study the efficacy and cost effectiveness of integrated pest management (IPM) practices compared to traditional pesticide applications in private, low-income, multifamily rental housing in Greensboro, NC. The owners and residents in 300 units will receive education, assistance, and incentives to adopt IPM. The effectiveness of the IPM practices will be measured through cockroach trap counts and resident questionnaires in all units, as well as measurements of cockroach allergen and pesticide levels in dust samples from a subset of the housing units. The Alliance is partnering with the Greensboro Housing Coalition on this project.

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Please join the Alliance staff in giving a warm thank you to Brian Gumm. Since 2004, Brian has been the Alliance's Webmaster and Editor of the Alert. Unfortunately for the Alliance, this issue will be his last as he will be leaving us to devote more time to his full-time communications job. We wish Brian much success in all his future endeavors!

If you appreciate the news and information in the Alliance Alert, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Alliance! We rely on donations from individuals and organizations to allow us to do policy work in Washington and across the country. You can make a one-time donation or sign up to make a recurring monthly or quarterly donation on our [website](#). Thank you for your support!

Sign up to receive updates from the Alliance! To receive the Alliance Alert in your inbox and to subscribe to our no-cost listservs (Leadnet and Healthyhomesnet), visit www.afhh.org/forms/alert_subscribe.asp.

Upcoming Events

The **Housing Justice Network** will hold its **National Meeting** on Dec. 7-8 in Washington, DC. The National Meeting is a dynamic, two-day event that brings together low-income housing allies — public interest attorneys, affordable housing advocates, policy analysts, organizers, and residents — from across the nation. Attendees participate in sessions on current developments in federal housing programs, discuss strategies for representing the interests of low-income residents, and exchange ideas on litigating, advocating, and organizing. HJN members will also begin the process of planning policy advocacy and setting priorities for work with the new incoming administration. For more information, see www.nhlp.org/hjn2008/informationregistrationforms.pdf.

The Alliance for Healthy Homes will host a FREE hour and half workshop entitled, “Gearing up to Implement the EPA Repair, Renovation, & Painting Rule: How to Build Capacity in Your Community” as part of the NeighborWorks Training Institute on December 9th, 4:30 to 6PM in Washington, DC. The workshop will highlight how community development corporations and others can become accredited trainers and help expand neighborhood capacity to implement the RRP rule. For more information, contact Patrick MacRoy at pmacroy@afhh.org.

The Alliance will also be offering a two-day “Train-the-trainer” class on how to successfully teach the RRP class and become accredited under the RRP rule in Trenton, NJ on January 21 and 22 and in Atlanta, GA on February 16 and 17. For more information, contact Patrick MacRoy at pmacroy@afhh.org.

A national conference on “Approaches to Managing Mold in Buildings” will be held April 27-29, 2009, in Orlando, FL. Sponsored by the University of Tulsa, the conference will cover the “latest research and applied outcomes to use in field practice from key national and international experts.” For more information, visit www.utulsa.edu/iaqprogram or call 918-631-3088.

The 2009 National Lead Poisoning Prevention and Healthy Homes Conference will occur April 28-May 1, 2009, in Orlando, FL. The conference will provide a wealth of information and a series of panel discussions from healthy homes professionals and advocates. For more information, see www.LeadMoldConferences.com.

Save the date for the symposium entitled “Promoting Environmental and Policy Change to Support Healthy Aging,” to be held Sept. 15-16, 2009, in Chapel Hill, NC. This symposium is a third in a series funded by CDC’s Healthy Aging Program. More information on this symposium can be found at www.prc-han.org.

