

LEAD FREE



LFNJ/Newark Community Hub Advocacy & Action Plan

11/23/2022

Developed by Newark Hub leader & Lead-Free NJ (LFNJ) community organizer/liaison with input from LFNJ backbone staff and committees.

Note: Plan is subject to change throughout the year given developments, opportunities, or capacity. Newark's plan has a different orientation from Paterson and Trenton given the specific role that Newark Water Coalition (NWC) intends to play in the community, as well as their specific readiness, capacity to implement, and desire to be self-sufficient.

Objective: Reduce Newark community member's exposure to lead and resulting health impacts by accelerating efforts to reduce the hazards and enable holistic lead remediation.

Timing:

- Planning process among hubs and LFNJ community liaison: September through November 2022. Involves identifying needs, gaps, and opportunities.
- Review by LFNJ backbone staff and committees in November.
- Plans adopted by Advocacy Committee on November 28, 2022.
- Plans adopted into Advocacy Committee Plan by Steering Committee on January 24, 2023.
- Hubs working with LFNJ community liaison to translate the plans into work plans for implementation: December 2022 through January 2023.

Key Findings to Support Plan Development:

- Lead service lines are not an issue in Newark like they are in other communities.
- Due to COVID-19, children have missed well visits where they could be getting screened for lead levels. [One study](#) found this is higher among Hispanic children in comparison to other racial groups: non-Hispanic Black children had the lowest rate of missed visits.
- Recent NWC mobile unit testing data showed elevated levels of lead in soil.

- HUD has awarded the City of Newark a \$5.6 million Lead Hazard Reduction (LHR) grant to help protect children under 6 years old, pregnant women, and their families from lead-based paint hazards and other health and safety hazards in the home. They have seven inspectors on staff.
- The health department conducts screening for lead poisoning through the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.
- It is difficult for community members to become lead assessors if they don't have adequate prerequisites. This leaves opportunities for expansion on the table.
- Interventions for soil remediation are not clear and may require funding and education.

What Overall Short- and Medium-Term Success Looks Like

These high-level success outcomes inform our awareness and education work and advocacy priorities.

Community Members

- 1) Community members and influencers understand the risks associated with lead exposure.
- 2) Community members take action to get blood lead levels tested for children aged six and younger.
- 3) Community members at risk of exposure due to high EBLL or other causes (i.e., pre-1978 homes, lead service lines (LSL)) proactively seek strategies and tools to reduce exposure inside (paint, dust, water) and outside their homes (soil).
- 4) Community members advocate for improved and accelerated lead remediation inside and outside their homes.
- 5) All pre-1978 homes are tested for lead.

The City

- 6) The city and local organizations have implemented a successful lead-safe certification program and lead service line replacement program and blood level testing program.
- 7) The City Health Department has restarted lead blood level testing and implemented it as a frequent program.

The Healthcare Community

- 8) The healthcare community has expanded lead blood level testing to ensure easy access for community members, including pediatricians who actively follow up to ensure testing is completed.

The State

- 9) The state of New Jersey has effectively funded and accelerated lead service line replacements, home lead remediation and abatement, expanded this work to soil and mandated blood lead level testing for young children.

2023 Strategies to Build Awareness, Engagement, and Influence Local and State

Policy and Process Changes:

- A) Develop an outreach and advocacy strategy based on the results of the mobile testing unit pilot of lead in water, soil, and paint.
- Completed mobile testing unit of 300 homes for lead in water, soil, paint, dust, and six parks. Data expected end of 2022.
 - Put a report together to showcase the effort and use it as an advocacy and outreach tool.

Goal: Develop awareness campaign based on NWC's research and findings: Q1 2023.

- B) Expand lead remediation efforts.
- Open up a Training Center to certify community members as lead assessors.
- C) Expand relevant social and environmental justice research efforts.
- Open a public research center with doctors and PhD students.
- D) Leverage Newark's capacity to support work done in other hubs.
- Sample testing: NWC team would conduct 25 whole home tests and test one park.
- E) Understand better local blood level testing deficiencies.
- F) Build capacity.
- a) Seek funding to expand operations and build new initiatives including expanding mobile testing unit, and to build a training and public research center.
- G) Advocacy priorities:
- 1) Community advocates to the State directly or through LFNJ Housing and Water Committees:**

Paint and Soil:

- **Hold DCA accountable** for developing workforce development, training resources, an education program, and *equipment purchases (including XRF analyzers), especially in areas with high need.* (Next step: raise this to the LFNJ Housing Committee).
- **Support local workforce members** in getting certified and meeting the requirements for certification. Requirements and prerequisites to become a lead assessor may be too rigorous for local community

members to become certified. Ensure appropriate requirements so that the Newark Water Coalition or other local organizations can take on this work and/or become a training institute. Perhaps allow for community members with sufficient field experience to be certified lead assessors, i.e. demonstrate commitment and relevant experience for two years. (Next step: Explore with LFNJ Housing Committee).

- **Funding for remediation:** DCA is accountable for maintaining transparency and clear communication around release of the American Rescue Plan Act funds and other resources. (Next step: raise this to the Housing Committee).
- **Ensure community members who must relocate temporarily** during home lead remediation and don't suffer from financial consequences or possible eviction. (Next step: raise to Housing Committee).
- **New idea:** DCA or other governmental bodies ought to develop soil remediation guidelines, interventions, possible training and funding. (Next Steps: raise to Housing Committee; use Newark Water Coalition's sample testing as advocacy tool to help build the case in Q1 2023 (estimated)).
- **New idea:** Push DCA for more support for data management systems for all the lead dust wipe inspections rather than asking each municipality with this requirement to invent or pay for their own.
- **New idea:** Make access to testing easier for dust wipe sampling.
- **New idea:** Push DCA for more targeted support for small, local landlords seeking to meet the new requirement.
- **New idea:** Push DCA for more support for data management systems for all the lead dust wipe inspections rather than asking each municipality with this requirement to invent or pay for their own.

Lead Screening

- **Make lead screening mandatory for school entry;** children up to six years old should be tested. (Next step: Bill S1507 introduced; organize comments during testimony; invite Council to write a letter to the legislature).
 - Ensure this data is publicly available.
- **New legislative idea:** Make mandatory that pediatricians follow up when referring for blood lead level testing. (Next step: Determine the way to influence this).
- **New legislative idea:** Make mandatory for K–12, blood lead level testing at least once a year to improve the data about blood-lead levels (Next step: raise to Housing Committee).

2) Community members advocate to the municipality through local organizing:

- **Expanded, accessible lead blood level testing** until it becomes required in schools. (Next step: Explore with local partners opportunities to expand

testing).

- **Expand City Health Department testing.**(Next step: Advocate to City Council)
- **City Health Department ensures active education and outreach** at community-based venues to raise awareness, encourage BLLL testing and inspection.
- **City government held accountable for implementation and meaningful enforcement of the new lead inspection law.** Develop a system for tracking homes that are lead-safe certified and sharing publicly. Holds landlords accountable. (Next step: Hub to include in local Advocacy plan for Q1 2023. Work with LFNJ Housing Committee to compile best practices to share with city government).
- **Take advantage of workforce development and training resources** that DCA has mentioned they will create. (Next step: Recommend the city pushes out information; outreach for community members to participate once resources launch).