



## LFNJ/Trenton Community Hub Advocacy & Action Plan

Updated: 1/4/2024, First published: 11/23/2022

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

*Note: Plan is subject to change throughout the year given developments, opportunities, or capacity.*

**Objective:** Reduce Trenton community members' exposure to lead and resulting health impacts by accelerating efforts to reduce the hazards and enable holistic lead remediation.

**Potentially Measurable Goals:** Goals to explore in 2024: number of testing events held, number of community events held, number of new partners added to the Trenton community hub network, number of homes abated; number of homes with lead-safe certificates; and number of homes with replaced lead service lines, number of speaking engagements.

### **Timing of Plan Implementation:**

- Planning process among Hubs and LFNJ community liaison: September–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 translate the plans into work plans for implementation: December 2022 through January 2023.

### **Key Findings to Date that Informed Plan Development:**

- Lead advocates canvassing have a tough time sharing information with Spanish speaking residents because of language barriers.
- Additional language needs in Trenton should be investigated, including Korean.
- Non Hispanic Black children are close to three times as likely, and Latino children two times as likely, to have elevated BLLs as compared to Caucasian children.
- Due to COVID-19, children have missed well visits where they could be screened for lead levels.
- Limited access to lead-level screening for young children and need for a follow-up process. Pediatricians may not follow up on testing referrals; testing may be referred to other locations; Trenton Health Department not currently offering testing (as of 12/2023).
- City lead paint inspection and remediation process tied to the new lead paint inspection law is not clear nor has it begun. Notices have still not gone out.

- Community members are not fully aware of the steps that they can take to reduce exposure to lead or take action to address it.
- Lead prevention may not be a top priority for community members given other daily pressures.
- Lead levels in the soil (at least in certain areas) exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's standard.
- COVID-19 interrupted progress being made by the Trenton Health Department. Need to re-engage.
- Messaging that highlights the longer-term impacts of lead exposure should be incorporated into communications to build a sense of urgency.
- Many children in Trenton have learning disabilities and behavioral problems.
- Crime is a big factor in Trenton.
- Community with health disparities:
  - Mortality
  - Life expectancy
  - Burden of disease
  - Mental health
  - Uninsured/underinsured
  - Lack of access to care
- The pottery industry was a big commodity being made in Trenton.
- Barriers to lead testing include:
  - Inconsistent messaging
  - Access to healthcare providers
  - Multiple steps to get tested (referrals to labs outside of the provider's office)
  - Language barriers
  - Billing barriers
  - Locations of testing facilities
- New Jersey Urban areas tend to have the greatest proportion of children with elevated BLLs
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that 20% of total lead exposure is attributable to drinking water. That share can rise to 40-60% in infants who drink formula made with tap water containing lead.

## **A Vision: 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 & Partners**

- Community members and community groups will identify trusted partners inside and outside of Trenton to achieve the following goals:
- Community members and influencers understand the risks associated with lead exposure.
- Community members take action to get children less than 6 years old blood lead level tested.
- Community members at risk of exposure due to EBLL or other causes (i.e., pre-1978

home, lead service lines (LSL)) proactively seek strategies and tools to reduce exposure inside (paint, dust, water) and outside homes (soil).

- Community members advocate for improved/accelerated lead remediation inside and outside their homes.
- Community members advocating for filters until lead lines are replaced
- All pre-1978 homes are tested for lead.

### The City

- The city and local organizations have implemented successful lead-safe certification, lead service line replacement, and blood level testing programs.
- The City Health Department has restarted lead blood level testing and made it a frequent program.
- More visible, transparent, and engaged with the community.
- More targeted outreach around lead testing and education.
- Proactive in enforcing laws that ensure the safety of residents living in pre-1978 lead hazardous-housing conditions.
- The City enforces housing laws, and holds landlords accountable for lead hazards with hefty fines or option for residents to repair with partners help, and option for tenants to legally own.
- The City provides a lead poisoning inspection team actively checking for pb in homes with children.
- Holding regular Environmental Justice info meetings with updates.

### The Healthcare Community

- The healthcare community has expanded blood lead level testing to ensure easy access for community members, including pediatricians who actively follow up to ensure testing is completed.
- Mobile testing has restarted.
- Engaging alongside the Trenton hub to work with state-level organizations to address lead testing barriers.
- Targeted materials to hospitals, and pediatricians regarding how, when, and where to be tested.
- Set-up programs for lead poisoning prevention.
- Enforce messaging around the dangers of (pb) to our children into adulthood through social media, television, and radio with public health announcements.
- Provide access to better nutrition.
- Promote the benefits of a lead safe community: less children with asthma, less crime ,less jail time, less time in emergency rooms, better health outcomes.

### The State

- The State of New Jersey has effectively funded and accelerated lead service line replacements and home lead remediation and abatement, expanded this work to soil, and mandated blood lead level testing for young children.
- Working with state depts to coordinate messaging, testing preference, process, billing, and follow-up.

- Different state departments work together to ensure that children who have been poisoned receive support and services, and lead safe housing options.
- Enforce messaging around the dangers of (pb) to our children into adulthood through social media, television, radio with public health announcements.
- Enact tough penalties to landlords that fail to provide housing free of lead exposure, and toxic dangers.
- Coordinate state efforts across agencies. (executive order)
  - the governor should appoint an official to handle, and resolve all lead related issues across state agencies DOE, DCA, DOH, DCF, BPU
- Coordinate A State-Level Campaign for a Lead-Free NJ
  - Serious public health impact of exposure to lead in water, paint, and soil; its broad reach into many New Jersey communities and the ongoing need to raise awareness, a comprehensive state campaign would maximize efficiency and ensure that all residents can adequately protect themselves.

**Strategies to Build Awareness, Engagement, Influence Local and State Policy and Process Changes and Build Capacity:**

- A. Lead Prevention Awareness and Education**
- B. Targeted State and Local Policy Advocacy**
- C. Ensure Hub Community Capacity to Implement the Plan**

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**A. Lead Prevention Awareness and Education**

**Actions**

- 1) **Targeted outreach and information push:**
  - a. Continue building partnerships/collaborations with local organizations and influencers who can reach “sizeable” audiences of families with young children and represent Trenton’s diverse population, i.e. schools, pediatricians, health care facilities, houses of worship, community-based organizations and unions, and large conferences.
    - i. Prioritize opportunities that allow us to access harder-to-reach populations.
    - ii. May involve webinars and presentations (e.g. LFNJ Lead 101), listening sessions, material distribution, organizing blood lead level testing, and referrals.
    - iii. Lead documentary of lead impacts in Trenton.

- iv. Promote community trips with Trenton residents for fun and adventure while also using this gathering opportunity to educate around EJ issues (pb).
- v. Engage and involve more residents in the work and educating other community members.

b. Organize targeted community canvassing

- **Canvass and survey pediatrician’s offices . Develop a list of questions regarding availability, frequency, and barriers.** Message: Importance of lead level testing and prevention; importance of following up on lab referrals.
- **Continue Outreach to community members:** Knock on doors in neighborhoods at higher risk of lead exposure. Message: Importance of lead level testing; Deliver Lead Prevention education and resource materials
- **Provide information at local Barber shops/beauty parlors;** word of mouth.
- Bring mobile testing units to the community with services needed.

**2) Broad outreach/information push:** Timely, strategic media. Ideas being explored:

- **COMPLETED: Complete local Lead-Free “How to Get the Lead Out” Resource** piece that clearly explains where to go/who to call for testing, lead service line replacement, paint remediation, etc. Distribute at events, post on social media, broader distribution through partners.
  - Identify any additional language needs
- Continue **Pushing information via local social media;** leverage NJF communications consultant. Develop hashtags for the various organizations by the end of February 2023. Source real stories of lead poisoning.
- Update/develop LFNJ Trenton Hub website
- Continue **Organizing community meetings** in collaboration with trusted community spaces: library, senior centers, city council meetings. LFNJ Lead 101 awareness presentation/workshop.
- **Develop and Place Flyers in key locations** especially with harder to reach community members; i.e. bodegas, barber and beauty shops; grocery stores; health care centers; library; and transportation.
- **COMPLETED: Community collaboration around the design of a billboard.** Work with local art departments and place-making orgs. (Consider doing this again and change up the messaging) Also make sure to input more community involvement with design.
- Work with Partners and NJF Communications or others on a **short video**, perhaps animated.\* Broad enough to be used across LFNJ hubs; perhaps tailor a piece with community resident story, advocacy agenda, and local “how-to” resources.
- Bringing mobile testing units into communities.
- Conduct cooking/nutrition classes to raise awareness about the relationship between nutrition and lead poisoning.

## Short term Lead Prevention and Awareness Goals

- Targeted outreach
  - At least three partnerships ought to be solidified by the end of Q1 2023.
  - New organization outreach; one per quarter until we reach capacity.
  - Some Lead-Free Advocates in place by the end of Q1 2023. Continue to expand based on needs/budget.
  - Look into pediatrician outreach possibilities Q2 2023
  - Canvassing to reach community members Q2 2023
  - Canvassing with the department of health
  - Collaboration with local social justice orgs
  - Collaborate more with Latino organizations
  - Mobile Testing units regularly visiting EJ communities (mobile clinics)
  - Yearly bus trip to amusement park gathering many people together to build lead awareness.
  - Lead discussion panels with LFNJ
  - Lead Conference with Rutgers
  - Propose and organize community centered panel at the National Lead and Healthy Housing Conference 2024 (Steve Weil)
- Broad outreach materials developed and shared across several community communication channels
  - Trenton Lead Resources piece completed by the end of January 2023 in collaboration with other organizations.
  - One new social media message pushed out per month; start date: tbd).
  - Lead 101 workshop updated in Q1 2023. Start outreach.
  - Billboard
  - T-shirts
  - Create a 3-minute animated psa message.
  - Trenton hub monthly lead newsletter around community stories and lead awareness events.
  - Create an Trenton hub Power Point presentation about lead impacts and the benefits of eradicating lead in soil, water, paint.

## **B. Targeted State and Local Policy Advocacy (to be updated in January 2024)**

### Actions

- 1) Identify key lead implementation issues and policies that need to be elevated in Trenton and to the state. **Develop Advocacy Agenda and next steps for community members** to include

the following for Trenton:

**a) Community advocates to the state directly or through LFNJ Housing and Water Committees:**

Lead in Water Service Line Replacements

- **Lead Service Line Replacement:** More funding for Lead Service Line replacements
- **Water Filters:**
  - Lead in drinking water disclosure bill and recommendation to install a filter. (Next step: support **A3712** in 2024 as it moves through the legislature).
  - Filter distribution at child care facilities; bill introduced (Next step: support **A4770** in 2024 as it moves through the legislature).
  - New idea: Dedicated fund for lead filter distribution until LSLs are replaced. (Next step: follow up with city council)

Paint and Soil

- **Hold Department of Consumer Affairs accountable** for developing workforce development and training resources and an education program and *equipment purchases (including XRF analyzers), especially in areas with high need.* (Next step: raise this to the Housing Committee)
- **Support local workforce members** in getting certified and meeting the requirements for certification. (Next step: Organize outreach in the community)
- **Funding for remediation:** DCA accountable for maintaining transparency and clear communication around release of the ARPA funds and other resources. (Next step: raise this to the Housing Committee).
- **Ensure community members who must relocate temporarily** during home lead remediation do not suffer from financial consequences or possible eviction. (Next step: raise to Housing Committee).
- **New idea:** DCA or other governmental body to develop soil remediation guidelines, interventions, possible training and funding. (Next Step: raise to Housing Committee; use East Trenton Soil sample testing as advocacy tool and help build the case in Q2 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 for dust wipe sampling easier.
- **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 age six tested (Next step: Bill S1507 introduced; organize comments during testimony; invite city council to write a letter to the legislature).
- **New legislative idea:** Make it mandatory that pediatricians follow up when referring for blood lead level testing. (Next step: Determine the way to influence change).
- **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).

## **b) Community members advocate to the municipality through local organizing:**

### Lead Service Line Replacement

- **(SA added 11/28): Property owners must replace LSL before selling.** Recently introduced by Jersey City Council.

### Lead Screening

- **Expanded, accessible lead blood level testing** until it becomes required in schools. (Next step: Explore with local partners opportunities to expand testing; invite council to advocate to legislature to pass bill S1507).
  - Ensure this data is publicly available
- **Include robust city health department testing,** which is not currently happening. (Next step: Advocate to city council).
- **City Health Department starts/restarts active education and outreach** at community-based venues to raise awareness, encourage Blood Lead Level testing and inspection.

### Paint and Soil

- **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 includes this request 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 on these resources. Outreach to community members to participate once resources launch).
- **Ensure community members who must relocate temporarily** during home lead remediation don't suffer from financial consequences or possible eviction. (Next step: Advocate that the city ought to establish temporary housing or a hotel for community members. Ensure landlords understand the liabilities).
- **Right of entry ordinance** to encourage community members to allow lead service line contractors into their homes. (Next step: draft ordinance recommendations and share with Council).



- 2) Develop a process and local Lead-Free advocacy team to ask for commitments from the city through a) comments at council meetings, b) letters to the editor, c) petitions, d) partner with local reporters, e) one on one East Trenton Collaborative meetings with council members, and f) mobilizing other community members to demand action and participate in local outreach.
- 3) Develop research and advocacy tools to help build a stronger case with decision-makers.

### **Short Term State and Local Policy Advocacy Goals**

- **Organize quarterly advocacy to local government based on needs**
- **By the end of December 2023:** Draft letter with full Agenda for Council “In the New Year...”. Ask other organizations to cosign. Present letter at council meeting.
- **Q1 2023:** Begin soil lead level testing project with Rutgers on EPA/Mayor identified streets.\* Use aggregate findings to advocate for soil lead remediation and also overall city attention to the Advocacy Agenda.
- **Q2 2023:** Expand testing with Rutgers to include holistic lead home research. May leverage work of Newark Water Coalition to test 25 homes and a park.
- **Q1 2023** Lead in Drinking Water Listen and Learn session with Trenton Mayor and NJDEP.
- **Q1 2024:** Listening Session with community voices, and subject matter specialist concerning lead in water, soil, paint.
- **Q2. 2024:** 2nd Annual Trenton Lead Awareness Event with/COT, Isles, LFNJ, Rutgers, TWW,
- **Q2 2024:** Advocate for a Lead- Ombudsman to give ordinance to share child lead information between agencies like DOH, DOE, DCA.

### **C. Ensure Hub Community's Capacity to Implement the Plan**

- 1) **Coordinate with local organizations to ensure efficiencies and collaboration where helpful.---happening on monthly basis**
- 2) **Continue to build a pool of “Lead-Free Advocates”** who will take on targeted community canvassing work mentioned above, participate in elevating the agenda, and table at key events.  
Recruiting:
  - a. Define criteria: Community members who are passionate about the health of their community; at ease knocking on doors, holding conversations, advocating.
  - b. Continue to pay a stipend for their work. (to be defined by budget).\*

#### **Short Term Goals Q1 2023:**

- i. LFNJ and ETC host and organize a Community Engagement Meeting and/or Lead in Drinking Water Listen and Learn event with local community

members. Enroll community members who are passionate around the issue to become Lead-Free Advocate. Offer stipends.

- ii. More general outreach through partners and word of mouth. Get on their meeting agenda to talk about the work.
- iii. Offer training on advocacy, canvassing, and difficult conversations at the Trenton hub on weekends with partners, and community.
- iv. Q1. 2024: Collaborate with Art All Day to feature an artist with personalized lead messaging as well as hold a Community Health Day with EBL testing, Animated PSA messaging by the Trenton hub and XRF PB testing.
- v. Bringing NAACP, Street Justice Teams to the Trenton hub one Saturday a month to discuss community concerns around EJ issues with community members.
- vi. Q2 2024: Expand testing with Rutgers moving into phase II
- vii. Q2 2024: Amusement park gathering people together on motorcoach trip to amusement park to build lead awareness and prevention.

2) Hub leader **advocacy training** and participation in relevant conferences like Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey, Jersey Water Works, etc.

3) Forming **collaboration with Isles** to leverage their lead inspection, remediation, abatement work and training when needed.

4) Ensure a helpful **organizing system** in place for Hub leaders to track activity and deliverables.

- Developing a spreadsheet tracking system to track outreach efforts, advocacy opportunities, activities planned/completed and cost/budget.

5) Ensure **funding and management support** from East Trenton Collaborative (ETC):

- Tap into ETC funds first.

6) Look into **quantifying metrics/measures** of success. May include:

- *Number of children tested (next step: gather data for baseline and goal)  
(Places for testing expanded)*
- *Blood lead levels decrease*
- *Number of cases referred/investigated*
- *Number of referred homes abated*
- *Number of homes with lead safe certificates. (Next step: Ask the city to track this transparently/visually).*
- *Number of homes with replaced lead service lines*

7) Participate in and contribute to community organizing and policy training along with Lead-Free NJ and its partners.

\*May require more funding depending on ETC's current funding.