

News Release

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Kane County Health Department Encourages Families to Prevent Childhood Lead Poisoning

In recognition of National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 25–31, the Kane County Health Department (KCHD) is encouraging families to learn about the dangers of lead exposure, identify potential sources of lead in their homes and ensure children receive recommended blood lead testing.

Lead poisoning is preventable, but it remains a serious public health concern, particularly for young children. Even low levels of lead exposure can affect a child's brain development, learning, behavior and growth. Because children with elevated blood lead levels often show no obvious symptoms, testing is essential for early detection.

“Every child deserves a healthy start in life, and preventing lead exposure is an important part of protecting their future,” said Michael Isaacson, KCHD Executive Director. “We want families to understand where lead may be found, how to reduce exposure and why blood lead testing is so important.”

As of July 1, 2026, Illinois requires all children to receive blood lead testing at approximately 12 and 24 months of age. Children age 6 and younger must also be assessed for lead exposure risks during routine healthcare visits, with additional testing as indicated. The expanded testing requirements are intended to identify lead exposure earlier, allowing families and healthcare providers to take action before further harm occurs.

Lead can be present in everyday environments and products, including:

- Lead-based paint and dust, particularly in homes built before 1978.
- Contaminated soil near older buildings, roadways or industrial sites.
- Lead that enters water through certain pipes, plumbing fixtures or solder.
- Some imported pottery, dishes, spices, cosmetics, and toys.
- Activities involving lead, such as construction, renovation, ammunition or stained-glass work can bring lead dust into the home.

KCHD encourages residents to take steps to reduce lead exposure:

- Have children tested for lead at the recommended ages.
- Wash children's hands and toys frequently, especially before meals.
- Clean floors, windowsills and other surfaces regularly using wet cleaning methods to reduce lead dust.
- Keep children away from peeling paint and renovation areas in older homes.

- Use lead-safe practices when repairing or renovating homes built before 1978.
- Use only cold tap water for drinking, cooking and preparing infant formula, and consider certified water filters when lead is a concern.
- Talk with a healthcare provider about lead exposure risks and testing.

Join us at KCHD's Safe Home for the Holidays event on November 5 from 4–6 p.m. at our Aurora office at 1240 N. Highland Avenue, where you can bring your holiday serving dishes to be tested for lead at no cost. Registration is not required.

KCHD's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program works to prevent lead exposure and supports families of children with elevated blood lead levels through education, follow-up and connections to resources. For more information about childhood lead poisoning prevention, testing and available resources, visit the Kane County Health Department's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at: <https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/Lead.aspx>