

Salem County Department of Health and Human Services

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CHILD LEAD FACTS IN SALEM COUNTY

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- The primary source of lead exposure to children involves lead paint: peeling or deteriorated leaded paint, lead contaminated dust created during renovations or paint removal, or lead contamination brought home by adults who work in an occupation that involves lead.
- In Salem County, lead exposure in children is related to older housing stock. According to statistics provided by the NJ Department of Health, based on 2013 US Census Data, Salem County has the lowest number of pre-1950 housing stock – approximately 12,000 units in the state. That is about 25% of all Salem County housing.
- The areas identified with the highest number of children with lead poisoning are Salem City and Penns Grove.
- Children under the age of 6 are routinely tested by pediatricians to determine if lead is present in their blood. A “needle prick” test (capillary test) in the office may indicate a level requiring further blood work by a lab (venous test.)
- According to the New Jersey Department of Health statistics, available on its website, Salem County tested more children under the age of three for lead than in any other county in the state. Salem County tested 93 per cent of all children under the age of three who were born in 2010, according to the NJ Health Assessment Data, published in August 2014.
- According to the Center for Disease Control Summary Data for NJ issued in 2014, 853 children in Salem County were tested for lead; 12 were confirmed to have over 10 micrograms per deciliter of lead in the blood, 5 who are from the same address. Ten micrograms is the level determined to warrant active intervention.
- When looking at statistics it is important to look behind the numbers to put them in perspective. For example, using the CDC statistical chart, Salem County has the highest percentage of lead cases – our 12 children represented about one and one-half per cent (1.4 per cent) of those children tested. Several case anomalies can affect that statistic – such as the case where a child frequented a relative’s home in Philadelphia, where the lead was discovered. The child’s home in Salem County was lead free.

What does Salem County Department of Health & Humans Services provide?

- Labs are required to report test results to the State Department of Health, which puts the information into a statewide database. If a Salem County child is identified, a public health nurse is immediately assigned to the case to educate the family, ensure on-going blood testing to monitor the trend of lead in the child's system, and coordinate with the environmental division to test for the presence of lead in the home.
- The environmental division will work with the homeowner to ensure lead removal through a certified contractor.
- In rare cases of non-cooperation, the Department will pursue a court order to force compliance.

http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/ACCLPP/Lead_Levels_in_Children_Fact_Sheet.pdf

https://www26.state.nj.us/doh-shad/indicator/view/Pb_test_cov.pcnt_co_b04.html

<https://www26.state.nj.us/doh-shad/indicator/view/pre1950home.count.html>