



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Mahoning County
District Board of Health**

NEWS RELEASE

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | CONTACT: Joseph Diorio, Director Community Health Division (330) 270-2855 ext. 142 jdiorio@mahoninghealth.org |
| | DATE: September 19, 2011 |

DISTRICT BOARD OF HEALTH UPDATES LEAD SAFE HOUSING REGISTRIES

The Mahoning County District Board of Health has updated its web-based registry of homes in Mahoning County that have been made lead-safe by an Ohio Department of Health licensed lead abatement contractor. This registry, updated quarterly, can be found at www.mahoninghealth.org. Currently there are 359 properties on the lead-safe list, a significant increase from the 217 properties listed in 2010.

Other homes with unremediated lead hazards that have caused lead poisoning in young children are also listed on the website. In 2005, there were 237 unremediated rental properties with lead hazards in Mahoning County in this registry; that number has decreased to 137. Families with young children seeking a lead-safe home are urged to consult these registries and ask property owners for all information they have about the presence of lead hazards in their properties.

Among the 2,781 Mahoning County children tested in 2010, 51 of them, or 1.8%, had blood lead elevations. "This represents a 95% reduction in the number of lead poisoned children since 1995," said Matthew Stefanak, health commissioner of the Mahoning County District Board of Health. "Our goal of eliminating child lead poisoning from Mahoning County is within reach if we sustain our efforts to test all children at risk and make sure their homes are lead-safe," he said.

A blood test is the only way to determine if a child has lead poisoning. Although lead can poison adults as well as children, children are at greater risk of being lead poisoned due to increased hand-to-mouth activity. Lead can enter the human body by either ingestion or inhalation and affects the brain and the central nervous system. It is recommended that all children who live in high risk neighborhoods be tested for lead poisoning around the age of 1 year.

The Mahoning County District Board of Health receives referrals from the Ohio Department of Health for any child whose blood lead level is 10 micrograms per deciliter or greater and resides in Mahoning County. An investigation is then conducted at the address of the lead-poisoned child. Noncompliant property owners are referred to the Youngstown Special Prosecutor for enforcement action.

For more information, please contact the Community Health Division of the Mahoning County District Board of Health at (330) 270-2855 extension 142.

###