



OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Phone: 970-336-7204 Fax: 970-352-0242
1150 O St., P.O. Box 758, Greeley, CO 80632

NEWS RELEASE

Date: 09/29/16

Contact: Jennifer Finch, 970-336-7203

WELD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS CONTINUE WITH THE COLORADO CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM

WELD COUNTY, CO – For several years, the Weld County Department of Health and Environment has worked to address lead-related issues for children. The county team, when alerted to elevated lead levels in kids, would work with their families to decipher where the lead was coming from and how to protect themselves from lead poisoning. In 2015, the county entered in to a partnership with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to broaden the scope of the county's work regarding lead poisoning prevention. This month, the Board of Commissioners approved extending this partnership with the state into its second year.

Under this program, the Weld County Environmental Health Division works in conjunction with the CDPHE to track historical blood lead levels and to follow up with case management of blood lead levels with parents and clinics. It also involves the investigation of elevated lead blood levels, the providing of guidance to medical professionals, mapping of blood lead levels throughout Weld County, and outreach to parents, physicians/clinics, landlords/real estate agents, and general contractors.

"We are excited to partner with CDPHE to continue fighting lead poisoning," noted Weld County Board of Commissioners Chair Mike Freeman, "The safety of our children is a concern we take very seriously."

Lead poisoning, when occurred at a young age, can cause learning problems, slowed development, poor muscle coordination, behavior problems, and nervous system damage. To help avoid lead poisoning, it is advised that parents to be aware of any peeling paint, choose lead-safe renovation practices, keep their children from consuming dirt, and have their paint, soil, children's toys and ceramics tested for lead.

Additionally, the hands of children should be washed frequently, and any child-accessible surface (like windowsills or walls) should be cleaned and maintained regularly to avoid paint chips. It is also recommended that soil and paint lead tests be conducted on any property before moving in.

Weld County provides educational materials regarding healthy diets and proper renovation practices to avoid lead poisoning, and offers free testing of ceramics and children's toys for lead. The county also offers paint, soil and sediments, dust wipes and air filter testing services to residents. Weld County Environmental Health employees are also certified Lead Inspectors and Assessors, and offer blood lead level testing to upon request. To schedule a lead testing with the Weld County Health Department, call (970) 304-6415.

To find out more about lead poisoning and Weld County's lead level testing, go to:

<http://www.co.weld.co.us/Departments/HealthEnvironment/EnvironmentalHealth/Lead.html>

To learn more about the Colorado Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, go

to: <http://www.chd.dphe.state.co.us/Resources/cms/dc/lead/survbullet2005.pdf>

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