



YOUR COMMUNITY CAN BENEFIT FROM TESTING HOMES FOR LEAD

HOMEOWNERS AND RENTERS MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR A **FREE LEAD RISK ASSESSMENT** IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

What is the LIRA program? LIRA stands for Lead Inspection Risk Assessment. Using CDC-safety protocols, certified inspectors enter homes and collect samples of dust, interior and exterior paint, bare soil, and, in some cases, tap water.

Who qualifies for a LIRA? Several options are available for people interested lead risk assessments.

• **EBLL Home Investigation:** This program is offered through the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD). When a child under the age of six tests positive for a confirmed lead exposure at 5 µg/dl or above, ACHD will offer to conduct a FREE lead exposure inspection.

• **Allegheny Lead Safe Homes Program:** Offered through the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development, this program offers qualifying homeowners and renters with free lead-paint and soil testing throughout their home. If deteriorated lead paint is found, the department hires a certified lead abatement contractor to repair any lead hazards. Qualifications include:

- Must be occupied by families at or below 80% of AMI
- Home must be built before 1978
- Must be located in Allegheny County
- If homeowner, a child under six must live or regularly visit

Household Size	100% Median Area Income
1	\$58,100
2	\$66,400
3	\$74,700
4	\$83,000
5	\$89,650
6	\$96,300
7	\$102,950
8	\$109,600

- If renter, landlord must give priority to low-income families with a child under age six for three years

• **Home Lead Risk Assessment:** This program is offered through Get the Lead Out, Pittsburgh and provides free lead risk assessments to Allegheny County and City of Pittsburgh residents who qualify. Those who fall within the Lead Safe Homes program will be referred to that program, via Action Housing, instead. Qualifications are:

- Home built before 1978
- Both renters and homeowners
- At or above 100% AMI at free or reduced cost
- Priority (but not mandatory) given to those with children under 6 or pregnant individuals

Are inspections or assessments safe during COVID? Each of the inspectors maintains proper social distancing from the members of the house, wears a mask and obeys all CDC-recommended guidelines.

Why is a LIRA imperative to the health of our communities? There is no safe level of lead exposure. Lead poisoning (even at levels less than 5 micrograms/deciliter) causes permanent, negative impacts on children, including decreased academic achievement and increased behavioral and attention-related problems. At less than 10 micrograms/deciliter, additional challenges include decreased IQ levels, reduced physical development, delayed puberty, and hearing loss.

Who is most affected by lead poisoning? Children and women of child-bearing age are the most impacted by lead poisoning. Additionally, those who live in low-income neighborhoods with low access to health resources may be at risk.

In Pittsburgh, the neighborhoods most impacted by childhood lead poisoning are Perry South, East Allegheny, Marshall-Shadeland, Knoxville, Allentown, and Homewood. These neighborhoods are communities of color, ranging from 45% non-white (Marshall-Shadeland) to 90.5 non-white (Homewood West).

How does lead get in the home? According to inspections by the ACHD, the top sources of lead poisoning in our community are dust and paint. Lead paint was commonly used until 1978. Because 85% of our Pittsburgh-area homes were built before 1978 and there are more than 1,700 new cases of lead poisoning in our children, this is a significant problem. When lead paint chips, crumbles, begins peeling, or is disturbed by demolition/renovation, the resulting dust contains lead and poses a health risk.

What are the health effects from lead? Lead is a poison that affects nearly every system in the body, including the brain and nervous system. Lead is especially dangerous to children under the age of six, as their brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead and their growing bodies absorb more lead. There are no effective treatments for the permanent cognitive and behavioral damage that occurs when a toddler has lead poisoning

Lead poisoning contributes to:

- Damage to the brain and nervous system
- Slowed growth and development
- Learning and behavior problems (reduced IQ, ADHD, juvenile delinquency, and criminal behavior)
- Hearing and speech problems
- Other problems can include kidney disease, hypertension, heart disease, anemia, slowed puberty

How much landlord involvement does this process require? Communication with the property owner is required for programs that fix lead hazards; however, programs that only conduct testing do not require landlord involvement.

How can I refer people to LIRA? To refer someone to LIRA, you can have them complete the [eligibility form](#).

How can my organization spread the word about LIRA?

Help us reach the members of your community who could benefit from a LIRA.

- Post *the attached FAQ* on your social media or public bulletin boards
- Send the FAQ sheet in a newsletter
- Email info@womenforahealthyenvironment.org to have us present to your organization at a meeting!



Get the Lead Out, Pittsburgh