



Ohio Healthy Homes Network

Proposal for an Ohio Lead Legislative Study Group

Why do we need a Lead Legislative Study Group?

Ohio needs a Lead Legislative Study Group to shift the focus of Ohio's lead law (ORC Chapter 3742) from simply *responding* to childhood lead poisoning to *preventing* it. The law was passed in 2002 before research revealed that even very low levels of lead result in loss of IQ points. Ohio needs a new approach, one that will protect children from deteriorating lead-based paint in homes built before 1978. A few facts about Ohio's lead problem:

- Ohio has 652,311 occupied housing units containing lead hazards (State Consolidated Plan 2010-2014).
- Approximately 4,400 Ohio children annually have elevated blood lead levels of 5 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood or greater (2015 ODH data). However, only half of Ohio one and two year olds at risk for poisoning receive lead tests so the actual number is higher (Medicaid testing rates 2008-2011).
- Though the health effects of lead poisoning are irreversible, the potential long-term impact can be reduced through early intervention. A backlog of lead cases in public health departments results in many Ohio children not receiving referrals to services.

Has Ohio ever addressed lead through a Legislative Study Group like this?

Yes, a legislative working group met for one year (1999 to 2000) to recommend changes in Ohio's lead law; their efforts resulted in major changes to Chapter 3742 that were signed into law in 2003.

What are some of OHHN's goals for the Lead Legislative Study Group?

- Create financing tools for assist in controlling lead hazards such as loans, grants and possibly tax credits. Make tools available to pre-1978 rental property owners and homeowners.
- Shift focus of Ohio's lead law to maintenance of pre-1978 rental property in lead-safe condition.
- Transfer enforcement of US EPA's Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule to the Ohio Department of Health to keep children safe from lead exposure during renovation.
- Make recommendations to improve public health lead investigations and get children who are lead poisoned into developmental and educational services as soon as they are identified.
- Develop a plan to help families with lead poisoned children with relocation, referrals to lead safe housing and other assistance to prevent family destabilization.
- Record documents on titles related to the lead status of residential properties including public health investigations, lead hazard control orders, orders to vacate and lifting of lead orders.

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