

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Baltimore to Host Very First National Healthy Homes Festival

September 12-14, 2008, in Druid Hill Park, Baltimore, Maryland

10 a.m. to 6 p.m

BALTIMORE, MD (September 12, 2008) Today, the National Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, in conjunction with the City of Baltimore, the State of Maryland and other local and national partners, will host the inaugural *National Healthy Homes Festival*.

The Festival will emphasize the state of Maryland's leadership and commitment to providing Healthy Homes for all of its citizens. This event will serve as a model for cities across the nation.

The Mission of the *National Healthy Homes Festival* is to educate and to expose Baltimore-area families, contractors, property owners and national visitors to key, useable information. This includes highlighting the best national practices, in an effort to reduce home-based environmental health hazards that can both injure and poison children, families and the elderly.

The Festival will bring together local and state community partners, in addition to area universities, lead and asthma prevention programs and Maryland citizens. "Our goal is for all city residents to be safe at home from threats like lead poisoning and mold contamination," said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner of Health. "This festival is a unique opportunity for city residents to learn about hidden hazards at home and take action to stop them."

This event will serve as the precursor to the *2008 National Healthy Homes Conference-Building a Framework for Healthy Housing*. The Conference will gather a broad community of experts to discuss regulatory, policy, research and outreach needs. "This event will examine the lessons we've learned, through our national lead poisoning prevention strategy and the current state of the art, as we begin to build the necessary framework for the development of a national healthy housing agenda," adds Ruth Ann Norton, Executive Director of the National Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning.

Baltimore was chosen as the premier location for the *National Healthy Homes Conference*, due to the city's leadership within the field of lead poisoning prevention, as well as for its commitment to creating Healthy Homes. "We're excited about this opportunity to protect the citizens of Baltimore. We will use this platform to educate and create awareness about available services," said Assistant Commissioner of Healthy Homes, Madeleine Shea.

In addition to demonstrations on preventative practices, the Festival will feature interactive activities for children, live entertainment and healthy food vendors. Daily festival highlights will include:

- **Friday, September 12th** : Spotlight on Baltimore-area school children and local University Programs engaged in public health and environmental justice issues
- **Saturday, September 13th** : “Do-It Yourselfers,” Contractors, Homeowners and the Latino Community
- **Sunday, September 14th** : Family Day

For more information on the National Healthy Homes Festival and/or media opportunities, please call The Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning at 410-534-6447. Please direct all media inquiries to Michelle LeDonne (mledonne@leadsafe.org) or Sara Zorzi (szorzi@leadsafe.org).

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