

CITY OF BALTIMORE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HEALTH DEPARTMENT PROPOSES TIGHTER REGULATIONS TO ELIMINATE LEAD
POISONING BY 2010**

BALTIMORE, MD (April 2, 2009) – As the *2010 Childhood Lead Poisoning Elimination* goal draws near, the Baltimore City Health Department is proposing four modifications to current City lead regulations to make Baltimore properties and children safer.

The proposed changes include authority to inspect any residence a lead exposed child has resided during the year prior to the reporting of the lead exposure. Additionally, they provide Baltimore City inspectors with the authority to inspect all units, common areas and the premises of multi family dwellings where a child has been lead exposed. In order to be consistent with state laws, City regulations will require that rental property owners immediately secure and pay expenses for a comparable, temporary, lead safe residence for the tenants and occupants. When a child has a blood lead level of at least 10 micrograms per deciliter, these new regulations will clarify the steps required for Baltimore City inspectors to issue stop-work orders.

Lead poisoning can affect nearly every system in the body. Because lead poisoning often occurs with no obvious symptoms, it frequently goes unidentified. Lead poisoning can cause learning disabilities, behavioral problems, and, at very high levels, seizures, coma, and even death. The major source of lead exposure among children in Baltimore City is lead based paint and lead contaminated dust found in deteriorating buildings. Children under the age of 6 years are particularly vulnerable because they are growing so rapidly and because they tend to put their hands or other objects into their mouths.

Lead poisoning is entirely preventable. The key is stopping children from coming into contact with lead dust. Screening children for elevated blood lead levels (EBL), ensures that lead poisoned children receive medical attention. Environmental investigations including mandatory abatement of properties with lead hazards contribute to ending childhood lead poisoning in Baltimore City.

To find out about the proposed changes to Baltimore lead regulations, visit <http://www.baltimorehealth.org/lead.html>

To submit a comment on the proposed changes to the regulations before May 1, 2009, write to:

Baltimore City Health Department
Healthy Homes Division
Attention: Lead Regulations Comments
1800 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21201

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