



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Akron's Department of Planning and Urban Development Receives \$3 Million Grant Grant will Fund Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration Program

Akron, Ohio (May 8, 2012) – Today, the City of Akron Department of Planning and Urban Development received a \$3 million grant to carry out its Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration Program. The funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will be used to help eliminate lead based paint from homes in urban neighborhoods in the Akron area.

As part of the program, Akron will evaluate and take steps to eliminate lead hazards in 200 homes, targeting low income families with children less than 6 years of age. The program is available to both homeowners and rental property owners meeting the criteria.

Households where young children frequently visit, such as a relative's house, may also be eligible for assistance. The Grant funds can be used for such home improvements as new siding, windows, doors, porches, and other components of the home which test positive for lead based paint.

The effort to eliminate lead based paint in Akron area homes also includes outreach and education to engage the community and faith-based organizations, as well as provide training in lead safe practices to contractors and their workers.

Among those working in partnership with Akron to administer the program will be the County of Summit Department of Community and Economic Development, Rebuilding Together of Greater Cuyahoga Valley, East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation, Nazareth Housing Development Corporation, and Neighborhood Development Services of Barberton.

Lead based paint was banned for use in homes in 1978, but each year approximately 1,800 children and 900 adults in Ohio are newly diagnosed with lead poisoning. Lead exposure can lead to many health problems in children, such as reduced intelligence, learning disabilities, developmental delays, reduced height and impaired hearing. At higher levels it can damage a child's kidneys and central nervous system.

“As long as we continue to have children living in homes with high levels of lead, we will continue seek out funding for these types of programs,” said Mayor Don Plusquellic. “Our goal is to eliminate the dangerous hazards associated with lead paint – this is critical to ensuring that our children and their families are healthy and safe.”

End

