

MEDIA RELEASE

Information **Advisory** **Warning** **Update**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Steve Demick, Environmental Health Director
sdemick@stclaircounty.org
(810)987-5306 ext. 1426

OR

Elizabeth King, RN, BSN, Nursing and Community Health Director
eking@stclaircounty.org
(810)987-5300 ext. 1487

The St. Clair County Health Department Offering Free Open House May 30 Learn About Lead Prevention

The St. Clair County Health Department (SCCHD) is hosting a free lead prevention and awareness open house on Wednesday, May 30 from 3:00pm – 7:00pm at The Center of Port Huron. The Center is located at 723 Court Street; enter on Wall Street between 7th and 8th Street.

Stop by for the following:

- Blood lead testing for pregnant women and children under 6 years old
- Bring in your children's toys, household items (plates, dishes, etc.,) for lead testing
- Learn about lead prevention strategies
- Healthy Snacks will be served

In addition to the Health Department, representatives from Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) will be available to answer questions on keeping families and homes safe from lead and lead programs offered by the state. Staff from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) will also be there to answer questions regarding ongoing testing and monitoring in the area and other department programs and efforts.

Dr. Annette Mercatante, Medical Health Officer stated, "This open house is the next step in our lead prevention and awareness planning. The public is aware of the increasing levels of lead (Pb) observed at the air monitoring data station near Mueller Brass and while the levels remain in compliance with national air quality standards, we wanted to offer the community an opportunity to learn more about lead testing and prevention. Our job in public

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..page 2 of 2...

health is to ensure the health and safety of our residents. At this time we still do not know if people in the area have been exposed to increased lead. The greatest risk of lead exposure continues to be from lead based paint in older homes.” MDHHS is currently conducting a data review of blood levels reported among residents living in communities surrounding Mueller Brass. In addition, MDHHS is collaborating with MDEQ to develop a soil sampling plan for adjacent properties to determine lead levels.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), no safe blood level in children has been identified. Lead exposure can affect nearly every system in the body. Because lead exposure often occurs with no obvious symptoms, it frequently goes unrecognized. The only way to detect lead poisoning is by performing a simple blood test. Most children do not show symptoms of lead poisoning. Current lead testing recommendations state that all children under the age of six should have their blood lead levels tested. This can be done at their doctor’s office or the health department.

Since treatment options are limited, prevent lead poisoning by:

- Washing your and your children’s hands regularly especially before eating and sleeping
- Eating nutritious foods with high iron, calcium and vitamin C contents
- Not wearing shoes inside your home
- Mopping floors regularly
- Cleaning children’s toys
- Buying lead free blinds
- Avoiding having pregnant women and children stay in homes when remodeling is occurring

For more information call (810) 987-5300, visit our website www.scchealth.co or follow us on social media @scchdmi.

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