



Come Together on Housing Hazards

LOCAL ACTION CHALLENGE FOR LEAD SAFE AND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

Convene Stakeholders to Create a Housing Hazards Task Force

Moving the needle on housing quality requires action from landlords, developers, city departments, local housing agencies, hospitals and other stakeholders. Too often, each group works alone to take disparate actions without leveraging the other resources available in the community. Improved standards for new construction, for example, are important but do not address existing hazards in older buildings. Similarly, city programs aimed at children with elevated lead blood levels are not fully effective without universal testing and updated data.

What does this look like in action?

City governments are well-positioned to bring housing and health partners to the table. By making healthy housing a priority and articulating a clear set of goals and values, city leaders can create a unified coalition to eliminate health hazards in housing.

Greensboro, North Carolina is one city that successfully created a healthy housing task force. Starting in 2012, the Greensboro Housing Coalition has been carrying out their Advancing Safe and Healthy Homes for Children and Families Initiative, partnering with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Triad Healthcare Network and Cone Health to provide targeted home repairs for pediatric asthma patients. Participating households saw a 50-percent reduction in hospital bills.

Action Steps

- 1 Establish an internal city working group with regular meetings across city agencies.
- 2 Work with area hospitals and health agencies to use data on blood lead levels and asthma emergency room visits to identify high-risk neighborhoods and target housing hazard interventions.
- 3 Create a comprehensive resource mapping all existing healthy housing programs and services available and identifying any needed areas for growth.
- 4 Adopt a set of shared values and goals to launch and guide a housing hazard task force.
- 5 Build or participate in a coalition of external stakeholders that includes hospitals, community development organizations, landlords and tenant advocates.
- 6 Partner with a local health care coalition, university or hospital to systematically collect data on and evaluate work undertaken by the housing hazard task force.

For more information and resources

- [Advancing City-Level Healthy Housing: The Role of Partners; National League of Cities webinar](#)
- [Healthy Homes Renovations: Engaging Hospitals as Investors; Green and Healthy Homes Initiative webinar](#)

Action Challenges

- 1 INFORM AND ENGAGE ALL RESIDENTS**
Empower residents to tackle housing quality issues. Launch a public awareness campaign on healthy housing and/or host a town hall to learn about residents' priorities, and serve as a convener for landlords, tenants, health care providers, social workers and teachers to support community organizing around health hazards.
- 2 TAKE STOCK OF HOUSING**
Review housing codes and enforcement policies. Produce an internal policy document on housing code enforcement policies, noting areas that can better support healthy and equitable housing policies. Catalogue and explore potential funding sources.
- 3 COME TOGETHER ON HOUSING HAZARDS**
Convene stakeholders to create a housing hazards task force. Engage city departments and external partners, with an emphasis on data-driven decision making, to identify and address lead and asthma challenges in housing for all population groups.
- 4 STRENGTHEN HEALTHY HOMES POLICIES AND PRACTICES**
Create resources and build commitment across stakeholders. Establish a registration system and database of rentals and associated violations that is available to tenants and use these tools to promote property standards and improve enforcement.

For More Information

Please visit
nlc.org/healthy-housing-mayors-challenge

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