

2024 Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission Annual Report

Environment Article Section 6-810(c)

Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission
Maryland Department of the Environment

April 2, 2025



STATE OF MARYLAND

Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission

February 27, 2025

The Honorable Wes Moore
Governor
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President
Senate of Maryland
State House, H-107
Annapolis Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker
Maryland House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

On behalf of the Maryland Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission (Commission), please accept this letter as the Commission's Annual Report for the calendar year 2024, as required by Environment Article, § 6-810(c), Annotated Code of Maryland. The Commission, established under Environment Article Title 6, Subtitle 8, advises the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), the legislature, and the Governor regarding lead poisoning prevention in Maryland and specifically the Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing Law.

During the 2024 Legislative Session, the Commission reviewed, discussed, and monitored several bills:

- HB0097/SB0723 - Baby Food - Toxic Heavy Metals - Testing and Labeling: Known as "Rudy's Law." The bill requires that beginning January 1, 2025, manufacturers of baby food shall conduct certain testing on baby food for toxic heavy metals before packaging individual units of baby food for sale or distribution in the state and require, beginning January 1, 2026, manufacturers of baby food to make certain information related to the testing and a link to certain guidance and information publicly available on the manufacturer's website and to include the test results or a certain code on the baby food product label. The bill was passed and approved by the Governor.
- HB0241/SB0308 - Housing and Community Development - Just Community Designation: This bill prioritizes existing state funding from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (MD-DHCD) going to "Just Communities." This bill authorizes the Governor, on the recommendation of the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), to designate certain areas as "Just Communities" based on certain criteria and provide for the prioritization of state funding for

“Just Communities” to increase racial, economic and health equity. The bill was passed and approved by the Governor.

- HB0245 - Department of the Environment - Fees, Penalties, Funding, and Regulation: This bill included provisions that would double the fees for registration per unit annually from \$30 to \$60 for pre-1978 residential rental properties (Affected Properties). The fee of \$120 would be due every two years. This bill did not pass.
- HB0351/SB0361 - Creation of a State Debt - Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan of 2024 and the Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loans of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023: This bill would increase the special loan program to four million dollars. This bill would authorize the creation of a state debt in the amount of \$1,792,830,000. The proceeds to be used for certain necessary building, construction, demolition, planning, renovation, conversion, replacement, and capital equipment purchases of the state, for acquiring certain real estate in connection therewith, and for grants to certain subdivisions and other organizations for certain development and improvement purposes; etc. The bill did not pass.
- HB0864 - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Plans: This bill would require each electric company, each gas company, and the DHCD to develop a plan for achieving certain energy efficiency, conservation, and greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets through certain programs and services and superseding certain existing energy efficiency and conservation goals; require the Public Service Commission to establish a working group to study and make recommendations on extending certain program assistance to certain moderate-income households. This bill was passed and approved by the Governor.
- SB0481/HB0693 - Renters' Rights and Stabilization Act of 2024: This bill would limit the security deposit to one month's rent, which eliminates the practice of requiring the first and last month's rent. This bill also included an increase in maximum surcharges for certain eviction proceedings from \$8 to \$93 and prohibiting the district court from assigning the surcharge against a tenant, altering the priority and criteria in the Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Program that are followed by the MD-DHCD and public housing agencies for providing vouchers and housing assistance payments to families. The bill was passed and approved by the Governor.
- SB0482/HB0694 - Governor's Office for Children - Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments, and Households (ENOUGH) Grant Program (ENOUGH Act of 2024): This bill establishes the Governor's Office for Children and the Special Secretary of the Governor's Office for Children as the head of the Office; require the Special Secretary to chair the Children's Cabinet; require the Office to staff the Children's Cabinet; require the Children's Cabinet to meet not less than four times each year; require the Accountability and Implementation Board, in consultation with certain

departments, to submit a certain recommendation to the General Assembly by December 1, 2025. This bill was passed and approved by the Governor.

- SB0983/HB1473 - Hunting - Lead and Lead-Based Ammunition - Phase-Out: This bill requires the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to establish a certain process to phase out on or before December 31, 2026, the use of lead or lead-based ammunition for hunting; and require the Department to establish a process to certify ammunition as nonlead ammunition. The bill did not pass.

During the 2024 Reporting Period, the Commission meetings included the following Presentations/Presenters:

- **Strategic Plan:** The Commission discussed goals and objectives for the Commission to prioritize during the 2024 calendar year. Members of the Commission agreed that work performed by the Commission should determine strategies that prioritize equity and public health when evaluating the impacts to children and families impacted by lead poisoning. Recommendations were made to seek assistance from, among others, medical and academic institutions, as well as health and housing agencies. During CY 2024, representatives from the Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital, local health departments, and agency representatives held an informational and education session where challenges to lead case management and follow-up were at the forefront. Discussions revolved around transportation, housing relocation, and sources that impact case managers.
- **Update on Housing Strategic Plan on Lead:** Commissioner Williams presented to the Commission on DHCD Strategic Plan Lead Remediation Priorities. Key highlights in his presentation included: Strategic Plan Overview, Lead Remediation Components, and Three Tactics.
- **Impact of Greenhouse Gas Dollars on Lead:** Michael McKnight, Senior Vice President with Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI), presented to the Commission the potential exacerbation of lead hazards and exposure that Greenhouse Gas Reduction upgrades in housing may cause – thus calling for aligned efforts to reduce lead as part of that work. Mr. McKnight discussed the greenhouse gas reduction fund, a \$27 billion investment, and its three programs: Solar for All, National Clean Investment Fund, and Clean Community Investment Accelerator. Maryland applied for \$100 million under Solar for All to retrofit homes and multi-family units with solar and address housing deficiencies over five years. The National Clean Investment Fund aimed to fund net zero building projects through Green Banks, while the Clean Community Investment Accelerator targeted local lenders for energy efficiency retrofits.
- **MDE - Compliance and Enforcement:** Dr. Banks, Program Manager, MDE, Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (LPPP), presented to the Commission a comprehensive

update on compliance and enforcement activities for the first two quarters of fiscal year 2024.

- **FY2022 Report or Update from MDE:** Dr. Banks, Program Manager, LPPP presented a PowerPoint to the Commission on the Childhood Blood Lead Surveillance Report for calendar year 2022. The presentation highlighted the following: Preliminary Statistical Report; At-Risk Children 0-72 Months Years Old by Jurisdiction; Number and Percent of Children 0-72 Months Tested for Lead and the Number Reported to Have Blood Lead Level ≥ 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ for Calendar Years 2019-2022.
- **Thriving Communities Update:** Commission Chair Ruth Ann Norton, Green & Healthy Homes Initiative, President and CEO (Chair Norton), reported that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded GHHI a 60 million dollar contract to provide technical assistance throughout EPA Region 3. GHHI would provide Maryland with approximately 3.5 million dollars per year for two years, which will go to non-profit groups that work on lead remediation, stormwater issues, environmental issues, etc. The money is intended to build the capacity of the non-profit groups to address environmental issues. **GHHI was awarded these Cooperative Agreements in the summer of 2024.**
- **Presentation on Young, Gifted, and Green (YGG) Lead Poisoning Prevention Community-Outreach Model:** LaTrecia Adams, founder of YGG, presented a PowerPoint to the Commission. Ms. Adams discussed the efforts being made on lead safe service lines and work happening in Memphis, Tennessee, on lead that was recently covered by The Washington Post. Highlights in the presentation included: History of YGG, Canvassing/Door Knocking Campaign, Shop Talks, Black and Brown Alliance, and the YGG Model.
- **Update on Implementation of new Blood Lead Reference Level:** Commissioner Dr. Mitchell, Director of Environmental Health, Maryland Department of Health (MDH), presented on efforts to revise clinical practice guidelines for lead exposure, Maryland's adoption of the 3.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ blood-lead reference value introduced by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and needed clinical community education.
- **Lead Funding/Unit Production:** Katherine Taylor, Director of the Lead Hazard Reduction Program, Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development BC-DHCD, presented the status of grants administered by the BC-DHCD, including unit production, challenges, and solutions.
- **Story Map Initiative - Mapping Statewide Efforts in Housing, Equity, and Lead Prevention:** Commissioner Dr. Mitchell recommended that MD-DHCD, MDE, and MDH review statewide activities, including those in Baltimore City and Baltimore County, related to housing, Medicaid programs, and more. He suggested creating a story map focused on

housing, equity, and lead, to showcase the state's extensive efforts in these areas, emphasizing both human surveillance and lead prevention. Commissioner Williams and Tyler Abbott, former Director of the Land and Materials Administration (LMA) from MDE, noted that this idea aligns well with both the agencies' ongoing "Just Communities" and "Environmental Justice" work.

- **MDE - Compliance and Enforcement:** Dr. Banks Program Manager, LPPP presented on MDE's Compliance and Enforcement. Dr. Banks highlighted the following: Number of Estimated Rental Units in Maryland; MDE Registered Properties by County; Administrative Actions & Penalties; Compliance Inspections; Environmental Investigations.
- **EPA's New Lead Screening Levels for Soil and Play Areas:** Dr. Banks, Program Manager, LPPP, presented on EPA's newly released guidance for levels of lead in soil. Highlights included: Lower exposure levels, soil screening standards, and EPA Guidance Documents and Strategies.
- **Aviation Gas:** Commissioner Dr. Paul Rogers from the Maryland Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) informed the Commission that the state of California recently passed a law that outlawed aviation gas. He raised the question of what the state of Maryland plans to do regarding aviation gas. Mr. Banks indicated that in 2023, MDE briefly began discussions on the subject, but there has not been any progress on the matter.
- **Lead Poisoning Prevention Week 10/20/24 - 10/26/24:** Commissioners and guests shared their successes on Maryland's celebration of National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week. A review of activities, which included press events, community events, and a social media campaign, transpired during the week.
- **Update on Just Communities:** Catherine Goughnour from MD-DHCD introduced the new Division of Just Communities, established under the Just Communities Act signed in April 2024. This goal is to identify "just communities"—areas in Maryland historically impacted by racial segregation, disinvestment, and environmental hazards. The designation will help prioritize state funding to improve racial, economic, and health equity. To determine these areas, MD-DHCD will analyze various indicators, including property values, housing conditions, and health risks. They are collaborating with local universities and utilizing federal tools like EPA's screening methods to refine this "just communities" map.
- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Revision to Elevated Blood Lead (EBLL):** Chair Norton explained that HUD intended to revise its EBLL thresholds to meet the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) "Reference" level of 3.5 for children under the age of six, consistent with the CDC standards of reference level and there would be an impact of moving to 3.5ug/dL. Chair Norton encouraged those at the Commission to send in comments to HUD.

- **EPA’s efforts on “Get the Lead Out” Campaign:** EPA Region 3, Environmental Justice Coordinator Carol Ann Gross-Davis presented an update on the Lead and Copper Rule; Get the Lead Out (GLO); Targeting Lead Exposure ‘Hotspots’ as a Whole-of-Government Priority; and Novel pilot project to increase Blood Lead testing screening.
- **EPA Lead Dust Standards Update:** Wes Stewart, Senior Advisor and General Counsel/Maryland Programs Director for GHHI, gave a presentation on EPA’s changes to dust lead standards (that are not attempting to be repealed by the current House of Representatives).

The 2024 meeting agendas and approved meeting minutes may be found on the Commission website:

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/land/leadpoisoningprevention/pages/lppcommission.aspx>.

During the 2024 Reporting Period, the Commission created the following subcommittees and/or workgroups:

- **Legislation Subcommittee:** The Commission’s Legislative Subcommittee for 2024 included the following individuals:
 - Commissioner Williams
 - Commissioner Manjula Paul, Nurse Consultant for MSDE OCC
 - Commissioner Anna Davis, Attorney for Counsel Gordon, Wolf & Carney, Chtd.
 - Mr. Abbott
 - Commissioner Dr. Rogers
 - Commissioner Jacob Benzaquen, President of JBZ Management
 - Commissioner Adam Skolnik, Executive Director for the Maryland Multi-Housing Association, Inc. (MMHA)
- **Strategies for Reducing Application Fees and Rental Obstacles Work Group:** Chair Norton discussed with Delegate Boyd Rutherford the issue of excessive rental property application fees, particularly for low-income individuals, which often amount to hundreds of dollars and are non-refundable, leading to financial strain. GHHI explored the possibility of establishing a fund to assist low-income individuals, but Chair Norton believes implementing a universal rental application for Maryland would be more effective in helping families in need of housing. She formed a work group to discuss application fees and rental barriers being faced in order to produce recommendations and suggestions to present to the Commission. This workgroup meeting included the Commissioners and guests listed below.
 - Angela Perry Hall, Case Manager-Family Advocate for GHHI
 - Chair Norton
 - Commissioner Moore
 - Mr. Stewart

- Commissioner Dr. Mitchell
 - Commissioner Williams
 - Commissioner Skolnik
 - Commissioner Benzaquen
- **Maryland Home Improvement Commission (MHIC) Contractor Education Workgroup:** Chair Norton asked Commissioner Susan Kleinhammer, President of Leadtec Services, Inc. (LSI), to convene discussions with Chair Norton and Commissioner Skolnik to discuss the MHIC Contractor Education Fees. Included in the workgroup were the following Commissioners and guests:
 - Commissioner Kleinhammer
 - Chair Norton
 - Commissioner Skolnik

Commissioner Kleinhammer met with the workgroup and reported to the Commission that contacting the MHIC should be delayed until after the current legislative session.

- **Lead Testing Kit Public Announcement Workgroup:** Commissioner Kleinhammer raised a concern regarding the unavailability of the lead testing kits typically utilized by contractors in the Residential Rehabilitation Program. Many property owners resorted to using non-approved lead check spot test kits, which are not accurate or endorsed. Commissioner Montgomery highlighted that 3M has ceased production of their lead check swabs due to a banned chemical. Dawn Joy, Training Division Manager for Aerosol Monitoring & Analysis, Inc. (AMA), confirmed this and stated that 3M discontinued production in October 2023. The only EPA-approved alternative was manufactured by D-Lead, though it is in short supply. Chair Norton proposed that Chevelle Bash, Outreach and Education Manager for GHHI, head up a workgroup with the individuals listed below. The subcommittee members collaborated to develop a public service announcement to inform homeowners and the contractor community about the sole EPA-approved lead swab available.
 - Ms. Bash
 - Chair Norton
 - Commissioner Montgomery
 - Ms. Joy
 - Chris White, Program Manager for Arc Environmental, Inc. (ARC)

Ms. Bash reported that a public announcement would be announced multiple times in 2024.

- **Rental Applications-Obstacles and Application Fees- Workgroup Updates:** Ms. Hall reported that the workgroup came up with some ideas to improve the situation. One possibility would be to waive the application fees for the Healthy Choice voucher participants. The workgroup also worked on a SharePoint with the homes that are lead-free to be able to share with the clients so they could have access to places that would be suitable for them.

- **Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development (BC- DHCD)**
HUD Grant: BC-DHCD applied for the HUD Lead Hazard Reduction Program Grant (FR-6800-N-13) and requested a letter of support from the Commission to strengthen their application. If awarded, funding would enable them to implement comprehensive lead hazard reduction activities that would significantly benefit vulnerable populations, particularly children and families residing in older homes with lead-based paint hazards. Chair Norton provided a letter of support to Ms. Taylor on behalf of the Commission “Lead Commission LOS.pdf”

During the 2024 Reporting Period, the Commission had the following membership updates and changes:

- Throughout the year, the Commission made several efforts to ask the Senate and House to appoint representatives to the Commission due to the regular absences of the current appointees. In October, the Senate appointed Senator Mary Washington to replace Senator Carter on the Commission. The Commission still needs representation from the House.
- Newly appointed Commissioners: Commissioner Hart, Naadia Hutchinson, Alexandra Nestadt, Nicola Tran, Commissioner Banks, Dr. Michael Ichniowski
- Commissioner Resignations: Commissioner Dr. Rogers, Jack Daniels

Commission Awards:

Yearly, the Commission recognizes excellence, innovation, and leadership from within the Lead Poisoning Prevention community. The Commission members voted amongst the nominees previously submitted, and the following nominees received an award:

During the 2024 Reporting Period, the following individuals received awards from the Commission:

- Wendy Boone, Outstanding Child Health Environmental Advocate Award 2024
- Delegate Sandy Rosenberg, Outstanding Advocate Award 2024
- Commissioner Kleinhammer, Special Recognition Award 2024

We appreciate the opportunity to update you on the Commission's work over the past year. We look forward to continuing our work in 2024 to further the Commission's vision of a Maryland in which all children are protected from the harmful effects of lead exposure.

Sincerely,



Ruth Ann Norton
Chair

Enclosed Addendum