

New York Ranks #1 in the Nation for Childhood Lead Exposure



Now Is the Time to End New York's Immoral Childhood Lead Crisis

Lead paint is the leading cause of lead poisoning in New York State. Despite this, NYS has no statewide system of proactive inspections of older housing likely to contain lead-based paint. Instead, the state inspects homes for lead after children have already tested positive for lead poisoning. Governor Hochul and Attorney General James have recently voiced their commitment to tackling this crisis, so now is the time to take action to end lead exposure in New York once and for all.



Lead disproportionately impacts children of color and low-income children. The distribution of lead-poisoned children along racial and socioeconomic lines affirms lead poisoning as a racial and environmental injustice.



In 2017, 25 upstate counties had higher percentages of children testing positive for lead poisoning than in Flint, Michigan, at the height of its crisis.

78%

78% of housing structures in New York State were built prior to 1979. Lead-based paint was banned federally in 1978.

12x

In Buffalo, children in predominantly Black and Latino neighborhoods are 12x more likely to get lead poisoning than are children in white neighborhoods.



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Lead Paint Right to Know Act

S.2353A (KAVANAGH) AND A.4820A (RIVERA)

Why is it important?

- Lead in paint and dust, if ingested or inhaled by children, can cause damage to the brain and nervous system, slowed growth and development, learning and behavior issues, and hearing and speech problems.
- Purchasers of residential properties often do not know if the property they are buying contains lead paint. Without this knowledge, families cannot take steps to prevent their children from being exposed to lead. Currently, the primary way that people are alerted to the presence of lead paint is when their children are found to have elevated blood lead levels, placing them at risk of developing irreversible and serious health effects. It is therefore critical to identify where lead paint is present before children are poisoned.
- This act will complement existing state and local laws on lead poisoning prevention. Section 1377 of the public health law, enacted in 2023, requires DOH to develop a registry of all rental residential dwellings with two or more units built before 1980 within communities of concern outside of NYC, and require they be inspected for lead hazards at least every 3 years. The Lead Paint Right to Know Act will require lead inspection reports that must be shared with buyers of residential dwellings and subsequently included in the new DOH registry.

What does it do?

The Lead Paint Right to Know Act requires sellers to arrange for testing for lead-based paint in their residence at any time prior to selling their property, and to provide purchasers with a certificate confirming that the property has been tested along with a report on the results. That certificate and testing report will be filed with the county department of health and the NYS Department of Health's statewide registry of information about lead paint in housing. If the seller conducts the testing in connection with the sale, they may deduct the cost of testing from the transfer tax.



"My 3-year-old was exposed to lead in my apartment. I have had to worry about the effects because children who are exposed to lead, a neurotoxin, are at high risk for delays in growth and speech, learning disabilities, organ failure, and even death. Lead exposure at a young age can ruin our children's lives before they truly begin."

-Enoshja Ruffin, Impacted Parent & Citizen Action of New York Member

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