



Lead Hazard Reduction Program

Updated April 2022

Program Outline

Introduction:

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie is a direct recipient of funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer a Lead Hazard Control Program.

Regulations for this program can be found in Section 107 of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, which is Title X of the Community Development Act of 1992. Policies and procedures established by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie are based on current federal, state and local rules and regulations.

Additionally, the City of Erie receives Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding. Each year, the City allocates CDBG funding to be used in conjunction with the Lead Hazard Control Program. CDBG Lead Hazard Rehabilitation funding is limited and will be offered to applicants in the City of Erie for additional lead work, accessibility renovations, and needed exterior renovations only when available.

Purpose of the program:

This funding exists solely and exclusively to reduce and ultimately eliminate lead poisoning in young children. Lead poisoning is a medical condition caused by increased levels of the heavy metal lead in the body. Lead interferes with a variety of body processes and is toxic to many organs and tissues including the heart, bones, intestines, kidneys, and reproductive and nervous systems. It interferes with the development of the nervous system and is therefore particularly toxic to children, causing potentially permanent learning and behavior disorders. Symptoms include abdominal pain, headache, anemia, irritability, and in severe cases seizures, coma, and death. Routes of exposure to lead include air, water, soil, food, and consumer products. One of the largest threats to children is lead paint that exists in many homes, especially older homes; thus children in

older housing with chipping paint are at greater risk. An item as small as a paint chip can contain tens to hundreds of milligrams of lead, which presents a serious risk if ingested.

Lead Hazards are controlled by encapsulating, enclosing, or removing lead-based paint; reducing lead dust levels; and by covering or removing lead contaminated soil.

Lead Hazard Control is not considered to be rehabilitation or renovation. Lead hazard control is the most important step a homeowner can take to 1) lower a child's current lead levels and 2) reduce the chances of future lead poisoning of children residing or spending a substantial amount of time at a particular property.

Lead Hazard Control activities may include the following type of work:

- **Exteriors** – Deteriorated lead-painted exteriors will be repaired. This may include wet scraping and painting, the application of vinyl siding or coverage with an approved encapsulate.
- **Windows** – If window sashes are deteriorated, they may be replaced with new vinyl sashes or repaired. Window troughs may be covered to create a smooth and easy-to-clean surface.
- **High-Risk Paint** – Other high-risk areas include lead-painted porches, floors, stairs, and parts of doors. Depending on their condition, these areas may be stripped, covered, replaced, or wet scraped and primed and repainted to reduce lead exposure.
- **Flooring and Dust** – Lead contaminated household dust is a major source of lead exposure and is very difficult to eliminate. The contractor may use special equipment and techniques to thoroughly clean lead dust. Carpets may be removed and/or replaced.
- **Bare Soil** – Bare soil with high levels of lead is another source of lead exposure. The contractor may cover contaminated bare soil with wood chips, gravel, sod, or clean soil and grass seed.

Parents are encouraged to have blood lead levels of all children aged FIVE and under tested. This test can be performed by the child's regular physician or Community Health Net. Households with children who have documented high blood lead levels will receive priority service through the Lead Hazard Control Program.

Eligibility:

Homeowners – Owner Occupant:

Homeowners in Erie County, who reside in a house built before 1978 are eligible to participate in the program provided that they are income qualified, and that there is at least one child under the age of five years who resides in the property, or at least one child under the age of five years who visits the property at least 2 times each week, for a weekly total of at least 6 hours.

Homeowner - Non Owner Occupant:

Landlords who own property in the geographic target area (Erie County) are eligible to participate in the program provided that their tenants are income qualified (low-moderate income).

Landlords with vacant units may be eligible to participate in the program. They must agree to seek tenants after the lead hazard control work is completed and give priority to families with children under five years of age - for a period of three (3) years.

Landlords **must also agree** not to raise their tenant's rent more than **5% per year for 3 years** after the lead reduction work has been accomplished.

Relocation: Rental Units

Lead Hazard Control work will require the tenants of occupied units to be temporarily relocated at no cost to the occupants (within certain parameters), to protect them from lead exposure during the construction period. Relocation **may be** for up to 10 days. Although The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie will work with the occupants to find suitable temporary housing, the occupant, and NOT RACE or the contractor, will be responsible for finding a safe place for pets.

Occupants that are required to relocate may receive a daily meal and expense allowance that will be paid to the **occupant 20-30 days after the job is completed.**

Owner Occupied Units

According to HUD Guidelines, RACE **cannot** guarantee relocation for single family owner occupied units. The occupants must make efforts to stay with family or friends while the work is being performed and will only be allowed to permanently re-occupy the premises after the clearance test.

Criteria for the Selection of Properties:

- All residents must be income qualified and all units must have a child five years of age or under residing in the household **or** a child under five years of age that regularly visits the property at least 6 hours per week on two separate occasions for at least 3 hours per visit. (Only applicable to Owner Occupied units) Units housing children under 6 years of age who have an elevated blood lead level (EBL) will receive priority consideration;
- In the opinion of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie, the structure must be habitable and structurally sound;
- Owner occupant or tenant's gross income must be verified to be low to moderate according to HUD Income Guidelines;
- Property taxes must not be seriously tax delinquent and the dwelling must be insured.

- All required lead hazard control work must be within the program’s scope and budget;
- Tenant applicant(s) agree to participate in the program and provide all necessary documentation to RACE.

Funding and property liens:

Funding for this program is provided by the US Dept of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). For owner occupied dwellings, the grant pays for 100% of the cost of eliminating lead hazards to an upper limit, and the owner pays only the administrative fees between \$50 and \$150, for processing. For non-owner occupied dwellings, 80% of the cost of eliminating lead hazards is paid through the grant. The other 20% of the cost is paid by the landlord/property owner. A small administrative fee is required to be paid for each dwelling.

Grant money utilized for lead hazard control work within rented properties is treated as a 36 month forgivable loan from the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie to the property owner, meaning that re-payment of the loan is deferred for 3 years. RACE will **ONLY** place a 3 year lien on the Landlord’s property for the total paid to contractor. Upon completion of the 3-year term, the property owner can request forgiveness/satisfaction of the lien. Owner occupied properties will not have a lien filed unless **other rehabilitation funding is included in the property**, which may require a 5 or 10 year lien.

If the program requirements are not met, the lien can remain on the property until such time that all requirements are met. Landlords must obtain and keep documentation of all new tenants to ensure that they meet eligibility requirements. ***RACE cannot satisfy mortgages or release liens from properties unless it is documented that all program requirements have been met for 3 years.***

Land Contracts:

Individual(s) purchasing units by a land contract will be considered as owner-occupant(s) provided that the following conditions are met:

- The unit must be the principal residence of the individual(s);
- There must be a written land contract properly recorded in the Erie County Recorder of Deeds Office;
- The individual(s) must have made payments for at least six consecutive months or for 10% or more of the contract amount.
- If all of the above conditions have not been met, the individual(s) will be treated as tenants in a rental property.

Itemization of the Application and Lead Hazard Removal Process:

Following is a step-by-step list of activities that occur in order to facilitate the removal of lead hazards in properties under the Lead Hazard Control Program:

An application is completed by the property owner and / or tenant. Applications are available at RACE's offices, located in room 107 of Erie City Hall, at 626 State Street, Erie, PA 16501 or by calling 814-870-1540.

The following documentation must be submitted with the fully completed application for occupants of the property, meaning owner occupants and/or tenants.

- a) Proof of household income, i.e.; (3) months pay stubs; Award/determination letters; documentation of other income.
- b) Employment Verification Form (to be completed by employer)
- c) Asset Verification Form (to be completed by applicant's bank)
- d) Declaration page of homeowner insurance policy
- e) Documentation of payment of property taxes, water, sewer, garbage
- f) Copies of birth certificates of all household members and non-resident child or children under the age of five
- g) Valid photo identification of all other household members residing in the property
- h) Social Security cards for all household members must be presented for visual inspection to confirm eligibility for assistance

Summary of the Process:

1. Upon successful review of the application, an RACE inspector will visit the property to take pictures and sketch a floor plan to develop a preliminary estimate of how much work might be required;
2. A lead Risk Assessment/Paint Inspection will be performed on the property and a written report identifying all lead hazards will be prepared;
3. RACE will solicit bids for the required lead hazard control work from pre-qualified, licensed contractors;
4. The project will be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder;
5. The applicant and contractor will meet with an RACE representative to discuss relocation (if applicable) and to sign the contractor agreement, notice to proceed, mortgage, and other ancillary forms;
6. The work will be scheduled;

7. Occupants may be relocated on the day that the work is to begin;
8. The work will be performed;
9. Upon completion of the work, a lead clearance test will occur. If the property passes the test, occupants can then move back into the property;
10. Before the contractor is paid in full, the property owner must sign a document stating that the work is satisfactorily complete per the Scope of Work.

Miscellaneous:

- Contractors will be required to use electricity and water at the property. No reimbursement will be given to the homeowner or tenant.
- The contract to perform the lead hazard control work is between the property owner and the contractor only. The role of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie is to provide funds and coordinate the activities required to have contractors perform the work, and to see that they receive payment for their work.
- When the work is completed and the property owner attests to the fact that the work is complete and satisfactory, the role of RACE is concluded. If future communications are required, it should be between the **property owner and the contractor**.
- Contractors use medium grade materials and **warrant** their workmanship for **one year**. The property owner should become familiar with the manufacturer warranties on all materials.
- Applicants will be required to sign an affidavit stating that under penalty of law, all information provided in the application is true and correct.
- Occupants may not be allowed on premises while lead work is on-going

