

**2025  
KANSAS  
LEAD POLICY  
TOOLKIT**



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This toolkit was developed through a collaborative partnership between Communities Organizing to Promote Equity at the University of Kansas Medical Center, the Healthy Bourbon County Action Team, and Rural Community Partners.

Lead authors of this toolkit are Kara Knapp, Christina Pacheco, and Jody Love. We appreciate their dedication and expertise in making this resource possible.

This content is currently under review by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. National recommendations referenced in this document may differ from state-level guidance, which may be more stringent.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

**PAGE 4:**

Overview of Lead Health Effects

**PAGE 5:**

Common Sources of Lead

**PAGE 6:**

Lead Poisoning Reduction & Prevention

**PAGE 8:**

Blood Lead Level Testing Laws

**PAGE 10:**

Residential Disclosure Laws of Lead Toxins

# LEAD POISONING



There is no safe level of lead exposure.



The key treatment for lead exposure is removing the lead source.



Lead exposure is avoidable.

**Most people who have been exposed to lead will not appear sick but can still experience harm at low levels.**

## Symptoms

### Adults

- Headache
- Abdominal Pain
- Loss of Appetite
- Constipation
- Fatigue
- Sleep Disturbance
- Decreased Libido
- Depression

### Children

- Headache
- Abdominal Pain
- Loss of Appetite
- Constipation
- Somnolence
- Vomiting
- Stupor
- Convulsions

## WHAT IS CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING?

Childhood lead poisoning occurs when kids come into contact with lead in dust, paint, soil, or water. It can damage their brains and nervous systems, affecting their growth, learning, and behavior.

This can lead to problems in school and later in life. Children with lead poisoning may have trouble focusing, be overly active, or act irritable, often showing signs once they start school.

# Common Sources of Lead

Lead is a metal from the earth. It was used in paint until 1978, gasoline until the 1980s, and water pipes until 1986. People can be exposed to lead in many ways.



Review the lists below to see if you may have items in or around your home that contain lead.



## Home

The main source of lead is paint in homes built before 1978.

Other sources may include:

- Soil around the home
- Old furniture/toys
- Dust from leaded paint
- Lead water pipes



## Soil

Soil can be contaminated by lead from various sources and tracked into the home, such as:

- Lead-based paint
- Factories
- Highways
- Mines
- Rain runoff
- Airports



## Jobs

Some jobs can expose you to lead and bring dust into your home, such as:

- Car repair
- Plumbing
- Painting
- Mining
- Construction
- Scrap metal work
- Work with batteries

Children can get lead poisoning by breathing in or swallowing lead dust found on surfaces, toys, and other household items. Even small amounts of lead can cause permanent harm to their hearing, growth, and development.

## How do I know if my child is lead-poisoned?



A blood test is the only way to know if your child has been exposed to lead. Testing early helps you take action sooner.

Doctors recommend testing at ages 1 & 2.

Your healthcare provider will take a small blood sample from your child to check for lead.

**Blood lead tests are usually covered by Medicaid and many private insurance plans.**



## Make a Plan to Reduce Your Child's Blood-Lead Level and Prevent It from Increasing

Work with your child's healthcare provider.

- Ask for a blood lead test for your child.** Any blood lead level (BLL) above **0** micrograms of lead per deciliter means your child has been exposed to lead. Identify the source and work to reduce their exposure to lead.
- Ask if your child needs follow-up tests or services** (e.g. nutrition, remediation)
- Tell your healthcare provider about possible sources of lead** (e.g., peeling paint in your home or the childcare facility, recent home repairs, etc.).
- Request a list of local programs that assist children with high lead levels.**

## Find and fix the sources of your child's lead exposure:



Find a certified lead risk assessor to look for all the sources of lead in your home and help you decide which repairs need to be done.

1. **Contact your local health department for help with case management and lead risk assessments.**
2. **While working to remove lead from your home, take quick and low-cost steps to reduce lead exposure.**

Find

Fix

### Paint that is in bad condition (peeling, flaking or chipping) inside or outside your home



Create temporary barriers over the area using duct tape or cardboard.



Vacuum with a HEPA filter and mop instead of sweeping or dusting.



Regularly wash hands, toys, bottles, etc.



Let your landlord or property manager know it is their responsibility to fix it.

Find

Fix

### Work, hobbies or bare soil that may be a source of lead



Keep shoes outside or wipe on mat before entering your home.



Remove clothes before entering your home and wash separately.



Cover bare soil and get soil tested.



Do work or hobby activities that increase exposure away from your home and children

Find

Fix

### Lead in drinking water



Use cold water for making baby formula, drinking and cooking.



Run cold water for a few minutes before using. Boiling water does not remove lead

# Overview of Kansas EBLL Rates and How Testing Laws Can Help

Laws can protect families from lead exposure by requiring early testing and residential disclosures about lead risks.

**Kansas state law does not mandate blood lead-level testing** but offers recommendations.

Comparison of childhood elevated blood lead level (EBLL) rates:

**3.2%**

National

**6.9%**

State of Kansas

**13.5%**

Southeast Kansas

**15.1%**

Rural Kansas

## Federal Law:

### Coverage for Children Enrolled in Medicaid



**All children** are required to receive blood lead screening tests **at ages 12 months & 24 months**



**Coverage for lead investigations** in the home or primary residence of a **child with an EBLL**.



**Full coverage for any services** needed to fix or improve physical and mental health issues found by screening tests.

# How Testing Laws Can Help

## Other States' Laws:

### Examples of Successful Testing Laws



**All children** are required to receive blood lead screening tests at ages 12 and 24 months **regardless of insurance status.**



Blood lead tests **required** for children deemed **“at risk”** (e.g., live in housing built prior to 1970s, live in specific Zip code)



**Proof of testing required for enrollment in a childcare facility or elementary school.**

## Massachusetts Example of Success:



Blood lead screening test required for enrollment in childcare and elementary school



Decrease in EBLL rates across the state.

Greater decreases seen in at-risk communities

**70%**  
Screening Rate

# Alternative Approaches to Kansas Residential Disclosure Laws

## Kansas State Law Aligns with Federal Law

Sellers and landlords must disclose any known lead paint risks before selling or renting a home. They also need to provide buyers and renters with a pamphlet on lead hazards.

### Who, What, When, and Where?



Lead poisoning can be prevented entirely by controlling sources of exposure.



The most common source of lead is deteriorating lead-based paint in poorly maintained housing.



Due to the link between lead exposure and housing maintenance, code enforcers and landlords are in a special spot to help prevent unnecessary exposures.



Making sure housing rules are followed can help find and control lead hazards better and stop children from being harmed.



# Alternative Approaches to Kansas' Residential Disclosure Laws

## Other U.S. States' Successful Disclosure Laws:



Require landlords to conduct routine, periodic inspections or inspections between each tenant.



Require landlords to provide tenants with lead inspection reports and notification of hazards



Focus on enforcing rules strongly in high-risk buildings and neighborhoods, and with landlords who don't follow the rules.



Uphold strict penalties for landlords or property owners who do not follow disclosure laws, or provide financial supports/incentives for those upholding disclosure laws.

## Massachusetts Law: Examples of Success



**Landlords must inspect at-risk properties between each tenant**



**Landlords must inform tenants of lead hazards and have them removed by a licensed contractor.**



**Strict penalties are enforced on property owners to ensure they follow the rules & regulations.**



**Owners and tenants must sign a form to confirm that lead hazards are disclosed and not hidden by the owner.**

# Additional Resources

- **[KDHE Blood Lead Surveillance Portal](#)**
  - KDHE website's provides information, PDF fliers, and videos on lead poisoning prevention, blood lead level testing and reporting, and elevated blood lead level management
- **[The Lead-Safe Toolkit for Home-Based Child Care](#)**
  - This toolkit provides home-based childcare providers with resources and strategies to ensure the safety of their childcare facilities.
- **[What States Should Know About the Blood Lead Reference Value](#)**
  - This factsheet provides information on what states should know about the blood lead reference value (BLRV) including the change in BLRV, their role in the change, and strategies to reduce lead exposure.
- **[What Local Government Should Know About the Blood Lead Reference Value](#)**
  - This factsheet provides information on what local government should know about the blood lead reference value (BLRV) including the change in BLRV, their role in the change, and strategies to reduce lead exposure.
- **[What You Should Know about Your Child's Blood Lead Test Result](#)**
  - This factsheet provides information on what parents should know about their child's blood lead test results including, ways to reduce blood lead levels and prevent exposure.
- Texas Health Steps offers online lead screening and prevention **[courses](#)** to physicians; view a list of courses on the Texas Health and Human Services website.
- **[CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Training](#)**
  - This training consists of two modules to increase knowledge on the hazards of lead. It also provides lead program implementation suggestions for state and local partners, and other public health professionals based on best practices.
- **[Recommendations on Management of Childhood Lead Exposure: A Resource for Health Professionals](#)**
  - This factsheet was developed by the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units provides information to health professionals on managing childhood lead exposure.
- **[Lead and Drinking Water: Information for Health Professionals Across the United States](#)**
  - This factsheet was developed by Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units to help health care professionals respond to concerns about potential exposures to lead in drinking water across the United States.