



# ONONDAGA COUNTY Lead Poisoning Prevention Initiatives

## Contractor Recruitment and Training

Onondaga County organizes and funds EPA trainings for individuals working in homes built before 1978. Since allocating funding to this initiative, Onondaga County trained 280 individuals in the Renovation Repair and Painting certification. This course teaches individuals how to use lead safe work practices in homes where lead-based paint may be disturbed, or where open lead violations exist. Of those trained, 30 were Syracuse City School District (SCSD) students. Additionally, Home HeadQuarters (HHQ) was given funding to cover 15 RRP scholarships.

The EPA Lead Abatement Supervisor course has been provided to 54 contractors. This course is required for companies looking to receive bid opportunities for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants. The Lead Abatement Worker course was provided to 34 workers. This course provides training for those working for a certified Lead Abatement Supervisor.

Follow-up with certified individuals occurs to assess post-training needs and collaboration with community partners exists to provide wrap-around services. The County will continue to offer the RRP course monthly, and the Abatement courses quarterly.

## Testing

Testing strategies focus on removing barriers to public health services. Both mobile and on-site testing is available in neighborhood locations to ensure blood lead testing services are available where, when, and how people are most likely to engage. The use of point-of-care testing devices provides rapid, onsite results, resulting in timely identification and response to children with elevated blood lead levels.

On-site testing is available monthly at the OCHD WIC Gifford Street location, the Civic Center Immunization Clinic, Tucker Missionary Baptist Church, and the Sankofa Health and Wellness Center. Additional neighborhood-based locations are under development.

During May and June of 2024, the Onondaga County Health Department partnered with The Syracuse City School District and Drakos Laboratory to provide lead testing at Pre-K programs in **5 schools**, which resulted in **141 children being tested**.

## Lead Hazard Reduction (LHR) Grant

This program exists to reduce lead paint hazards in privately-owned, residential structures throughout Onondaga County. The HUD awards funds to Onondaga County every four years. Since 2020, **198 units have been remediated, and 50 additional units are in the pipeline** to be remediated. The County has also assisted with the production of **144 units under the City's grant with approximately 53 units more** in the pipeline.

## Windows and Doors Program

Onondaga County has partnered with Home HeadQuarters (HHQ) and the Central New York Community Foundation to sustain their existing "Windows and Doors Program". Funds have been allocated to **24 rental units for window and door replacement**.

## Windows, Doors, and More

An expansion of the Windows and Doors program is in progress and will include full remediation in homes that the Onondaga County Health Department has identified a need based on affected children residing. **13 units have been referred as part of that program. More will be referred in the coming months.**

## Foster Home Lead Hazard Reduction Program

Onondaga County has set aside funding for properties where DCFS and the Lead Poisoning Prevention team have inspected and identified lead hazards that are prohibiting foster services from being provided. Onondaga County will follow similar protocol to that of the HUD grant to remediate the hazards, free of charge, for the residents. Currently, **seven homes** have been identified and are going through this pilot program with more in the pipeline.

## Lead Safe CNY Coalition

Onondaga County leveraged its relationship with the National Center for Healthy Housing to facilitate a strategic planning meeting in September of 2022. This resulted in the Lead Safe CNY Coalition's re-emergence with sub-committees assigned to carry out the strategic initiatives set during the planning meeting. The resulting synergy allowed for education efforts, blood lead testing promotion, contractor training and outreach, and data research to better inform the community of efforts to address/prevent childhood lead poisoning.

In December of 2023, the group reconvened for an annual review of the coalition's progress and to establish 2024 goals. Working committees were restructured to align overlapping strategies, and a committee specifically for affected families was created.

## Staffing

Funding was provided to support staff carrying out crucial programming. Staff additions in 2023 are as follows: Public Health Educator, Care Coordination Supervisor, Community Health Counselor, two additional inspectors, two additional case management positions, and two additional staff to assist with community testing activity. The program is evolving to meet the identified needs of the community.

## Lead It Go

This will be the second program of its kind in New York State, offering supportive enrichment services to families of a child with elevated blood lead levels. The program will begin providing services to families in 2024.



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