



LEWIS & CLARK CITY-COUNTY Health Department

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LEAD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A Year in Review

The East Helena Lead Education and Assistance Program (LEAP), formally Lead Education and Abatement Program, has existed for almost 20 years. LEAP, in conjunction with the City of East Helena and Lewis and Clark County, has accomplished a great deal during this time. When the LEAP was created, ASARCO was still in operation, home owner yard remediation was ongoing and blood lead levels in area children were above the national average.

More than 500 children in the East Helena area have had their blood tested for lead through the LEAP. Over the years, blood lead levels have dropped and are currently at or below the national average. Through collaboration with Lewis and Clark County, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the citizens of East Helena, area children's lead exposure has been dramatically reduced.

The LEAP has changed its name to reflect the program's evolving mission in the East Helena area. The main program focus has changed from cleaning up properties to assisting area residents with how to live and work safely around lead. Even with property clean-up, exposure to lead remains a risk to area residents as not all properties were or will be cleaned-up.

Over 700 residential properties have been remediated (cleaned-up), but there still remains lead in the soils that children and adults could be exposed to. LEAP staff, along with EPA, Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), City of East Helena, Lewis and Clark County Board of Health (BOH) and area residents drafted a soils ordinance to protect the public and the environment through education and a permitting process. The BOH adopted "The Regulations Governing Soil Displacement and Disposal in the East Helena Superfund Area in Lewis and Clark County, Montana" in June 2013 after an extended public-participation process.

Since the adoption of the regulations, LEAP staff have given certification training to 320 individuals; have issued 50 soils permits; and have reviewed 675 (811) utility locates in the East Helena area. Both certification training and soils permits are free and LEAP staff work with residents to make the process as easy as possible.

A soils permit is required when the following conditions are present:

1. The property where soil work is being done has lead concentrations at or above 500 parts per million (ppm) and the work will disturb or require disposal of more than 1 cubic yard of soil (about a ½ pickup load).
2. The property where soil work is being done has not had any lead sampling and the work will disturb or require disposal of more than 1 cubic yard of soil.

Permits and certification are good for two years after the date of issue.

A soils permit is not required when:

1. A property has soil lead concentrations less than 500 ppm.

2. A project does not disturb more than 1 cubic yard of soil.
3. A project is preparing an area for gardening, and no soil will be removed from the property.

Certification training is required for anyone disturbing or disposing of more than 1 cubic yard of soil, regardless of the soil lead concentrations. Certificates are good for two years after the date of issue.

The soils permit application can be found at the LEAP office, located at 306 E. Main Street, RM 201, East Helena, MT 59635 or on-line at: <http://www.lccountymt.gov/health/environmental-services/lead-education.html>

The Regulations Governing Soil Displacement and Disposal in the East Helena Superfund Area In Lewis and Clark County, Montana can be found on-line at: <http://www.lccountymt.gov/health/environmental-services/lead-education.html> or in Room 230, 316 N. Park Avenue, in Helena.

If you have any questions concerning soil permits or certifications call Debb Tillo or Jan Williams at 457-8583.