

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Land and Materials Administration

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LEAD POISONING PREVENTION COMMISSION

May 1, 2025 • 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. • Hybrid Meeting

Approved Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Adam Skolnik	Cliff Mitchell	Naadiya Hutchinson
Alexandra Nestadt	Fred Banks	Nicole Hart
Barbara Moore	Manjula Paul	Ruth Ann Norton
Benita Cooper	Michael Ichniowski	Susan Kleinhammer

Members Absent:

Anna Davis	Dalya Attar	Mary Washington
Christina Peusch	Jacob Benzaquen	Nicola Tran

Guests Present:

Adewole Adegborioye-MDE	Ilan Kokotek-MDE	Paula Montgomery-MDE
Anstasia Solano-MDE	Jennifer Thompkins-Verlyn	Rena Boss-Victoria-MDE
Andrew Roelke-MDE	Group	Reva Smith-MWPH
Angela Hall-GHHI	Jonathan Riddix-BC-DHCD	Rick Kessler-MDE
Bay Hanson-GHHI	Joey Nestadt-Public	Shadia Musa-GHHI
Chris Corzine-OAG	Katherine Taylor-BC-DHCD	Shamola Dye-MDE
Chris White-ARC	Kevin Stanley-MDE	Sheneka Frasier-MDE
Cynthia Herrera-GHHI	Kira Videan-MDE	Stephanie Cobb-Williams-MDE
Dawn Joy-AMA	Laura Nugent-GHHI	Suma Kondle-MDH
Denifah Bun-Tejan-MDE	Leslie Delcid-MDE	Thelonious Williams-MDH
Devin Valcich-MDE	Lisa Eibner-MDE	Tiffany Price-MDH
Dontrell Jones-MDE	Maria Prawirodihardjo-MSDE	Wade McCord-MDE
Eunice Johnson-GES	Marjorie D'Ambrosio-MDE	Wendy Phillips-MDE
Felicia Graves-MDE	Nancy Servatius-MDH	William Doyle-HCHD
	Nekia Randall-BC-DHCD	

Documents Distributed:

- Agenda 250501
- Minutes 250403

Welcome and Introductions:

Ruth Ann Norton, President of the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) and Commission Chair welcomed attendees and noted that the meeting would focus on updates on outreach and public events, along with gathering input on a June strategic planning session. Introductions of commissioners and guests followed.

Opening Remarks, Acknowledgements, and Other Discussions:

- **Concerns Regarding Lead Program Funding:** Chair Norton expressed concern over potential funding cuts to federal lead programs, impacting surveillance, epidemiology, education, and housing intervention programs. Chair Norton also highlighted the significant need for lead hazard mitigation across Maryland communities and the urgency of addressing this issue. Rick Kessler, Director of Land and Materials Administration for the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) confirmed that the issue was on the MDE's Secretary's radar, and he discussed potential actions, including raising awareness. He also reported that the Secretary was actively raising awareness in the media. Chair Norton committed to meeting with the Secretary of MDE, the new secretary of MDH, and Jake Day to discuss the issue of federal lead program funding and potential strategies for advocacy. Chair Norton proposed drafting a letter to the White House expressing concerns about funding cuts and advocating for restoration of programs. There was general support among the commissioners for drafting this letter.
- **Legislative Outcomes:** Adam Skolnik, Executive Director for the Maryland Multi-Housing Association, Inc. (MMHA) and Commissioner reported on the outcome of House Bill 352, resulting in a \$7.50 per year increase in registry fees. The discussion also covered the importance of lead registries and their role in funding and regulation.
- **Lead Poisoning Prevention Strategies:** Chair Norton discussed strategies to expand current lead poisoning prevention efforts to include daycare centers and schools. She suggested potential legislative proposals to improve tracking and oversight of these facilities. Commissioner Skolnik emphasized the need to track owner-occupied housing, suggesting potential collaboration with realtors and homeowner associations. Paula Montgomery, Lead Outreach and Education Coordinator for MDE's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (LPPP) indicated that approximately 40% of lead-exposed children live in owner-occupied housing. Susan Kleinhammer, President of Leadtec Services, Inc. (LSI) and Commissioner proposed registration requirements which would include pre-1978 owner-occupied homes, suggesting a registration fee for those seeking public services. Frederick Banks, Program Manager for MDE's LPPP expressed concerns about potential government overreach with mandatory registration for owner-occupied properties, while Chair Norton suggested an opt-in registration program focused on targeted education. Commissioner Kleinhammer raised concerns about the impact of liens on owner-occupied properties, suggesting alternative approaches to avoid financial burdens. Manjula Paul, Nurse Consultant for the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) Office of Child Care (OCC) and Commissioner highlighted that OCC requires lead risk assessments for pre-1978 properties and may require retesting every two years depending on the results. She requested guidance and training for lead inspectors on testing procedures, especially in homes near potential environmental hazards. Commissioner Kleinhammer emphasized the need for clarity on inspection requirements for childcare facilities, particularly regarding risk reduction versus lead-free standards. Commissioner Banks proposed creating a special committee to address these issues, including Commissioner Paul and Commissioner Kleinhammer, and potentially including representatives from K-12 education.

- **Strategic Planning:** Chair Norton discussed plans for a strategic planning session in mid-June, aiming to finalize the date and facilitator. She highlighted the need for pre-meeting materials, including asset and gap analysis, national best practices, and consideration of issues related to childcare and contractors. She emphasized the importance of establishing three to five concrete annual goals, beyond simply reporting on MDE's work. Dr. Clifford Mitchell, Bureau Director for the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Commissioner raised the issue of equity in lead exposure prevention, questioning whether to focus on certain populations or locations with higher risk.
- **Evaluation of Interventions:** Barbara Moore, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner for the Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital and Commissioner highlighted concerns about the effectiveness of interventions and resource allocation. Commissioner Moore emphasized the importance of understanding outcomes from current actions, considering universal testing, and exploring national best practices. She expressed interest in understanding what other states are doing, as well as national best practices.
- **Universal Lead Testing:** Dr. Mitchell explained the evolution of universal lead testing in Maryland, highlighting the shift from targeted testing in specific zones to statewide testing for all children at 12 and 24 months of age. He noted the requirement for at least one test before age six and clarified the documentation requirements for childcare and school enrollment. Dr. Michael Ichniowski with the American Academy of Pediatrics, Maryland Chapter (MDAAP) and Commissioner stressed the importance of universal testing for identifying lead sources and early intervention, emphasizing the significant developmental impact of lead exposure at younger ages. Dr. Mitchell also presented data showing no change in the number of children with elevated blood levels after the expansion of testing in 2016, suggesting that pediatricians are already testing high-risk children disproportionately. Commissioner Kleinhammer raised concerns about potential gaps in testing between ages two and six, while Dr. Mitchell clarified that tests from 12 and 24 months suffice for school enrollment.
- **Addressing Gaps in Testing:** Commissioner Kleinhammer expressed concern about potential missed elevations between ages two and six and the impact of changes in residency. Dr. Mitchell countered by providing data suggesting pediatricians focus on high-risk children, and Dr. Ichniowski further emphasized the greater developmental impact of lead exposure at younger ages. The discussion also included the benefits of finger-stick testing for expanding screening.
- **Addressing Adult Lead Exposure:** Chair Norton mentioned a recent Journal of American Medicine article linking lead exposure to 5.5 million cardiac arrest deaths, highlighting the need to consider the impact on adolescents and adults. She also mentioned the overlooked connection between lead exposure, hypertension, and kidney impairment in the Black community, as discussed by Ellen Silvergel.
- **Improving Outreach and Education:** Chair Norton suggested various outreach methods such as YouTube videos and social media campaigns to raise awareness among pregnant individuals. Commissioner Moore noted instances where obstetricians discouraged pregnant people from getting tested.

Agency Hot Topics/Current Events

- **MDE** (Maryland Department of the Environment) Commissioner Banks announced an in-person inspector contractor training on May 29th. Approximately 1450 certificates will be invalidated, and property owners and tenants to be notified by the end of next week.
- **MDH** (Maryland Department of Health) Dr. Mitchell discussed the uncertainty surrounding funding for the home visiting program, highlighting its dependence on congressional decisions regarding Medicaid and CHIP.
- **MDAAP** (American Academy of Pediatrics, Maryland Chapter) Dr. Ichniowski indicated he would contact AAP leadership regarding lead program cuts and consider presenting resources at their September state chapter meeting. Chair Norton suggested using the AAP conference as an opportunity to distribute resources to pediatricians
- **BC-DHCD** (Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development) Katherine Taylor, Director BC-DHCD's Lead Hazard Reduction Program reported on progress with a new grant, including the completion of negotiations and the initiation of the implementation phase. They are also closing out an older grant and planning outreach to homes identified in a fraud case.
- **YGG** (Young Gifted & Green) Commissioner Naadiya Hutchinson from shared updates from YGG, focusing on canvassing efforts targeting homes with lead paint violations in downtown Winchester, highlighting the need for a discussion on the lead paint violations list and the process for removing homes from it.
- **GHHI** (Green & Healthy Homes Initiative) Shadia Musa, Outreach and Education Manager provided updates on the activities of GHHI, including successful healthy homes tours, asthma awareness events, and an upcoming asthma summit.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Future Meeting Date:

Next Meeting Reminder: Thursday, September 4, 2025, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.