

Regional Update

A Monthly Report of Activities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia



April 2007

Reducing Lead Hazards in Eastern Shore Homes



The Eastern Shore of Virginia Lead Safe Homes Program was developed to reduce lead hazards in pre-1978 residential properties found to contain deteriorated lead-based paint. Qualifying homeowners and tenants with children under six years of age are eligible for the program. A brief description of the lead hazard reduction process follows.

A-NPDC hires a licensed lead risk hazard assessor to test the home

inside and out (including porches, sidewalks, and the soil around the house) to identify the lead hazards, using an XRF machine which can detect lead-based paint under multiple paint coats. The A-NPDC Rehab Specialist, Robert Williams, prepares the work write-up, which is then bid out to licensed lead contractors. A contract is awarded to the lowest successful bidder.

During the work, occupants are relocated and most of the contents of the house moved to an on-site storage pod. The first step is lead dust removal with a HEPA vacuum; then the floors are covered with poly, and the workers, wearing respirators and protective suits, wet scrape and wet sand surfaces identified to contain lead hazards. While the work is progressing, an on-site air monitor continuously takes air samples. Deteriorated surfaces are repaired and sur-

faces are repainted with non lead-based paint. After all work is complete, the contractor HEPA vacuums the interior of the home, and the Rehab Specialist collects wipe samples which are evaluated by an independent lab. If results indicate insignificant lead levels, the home is cleared for re-occupancy by the family.

For information on the process or to apply for the program, call Patti Merritt at 757-787-2936, ext 119.



Next Steps for Economic Development

As a result of the well-attended economic summits in February, Virginia Tech's Office of Economic and Community Development is preparing a draft study of our region's assets and opportunities. In early April, the study will be used as a starting point for organizing economic development efforts in both counties and for developing a new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for our region. This CEDS document is required every five years from the US Dept of Commerce, Economic Development

Administration in order to retain our region's important Economic Development District designation. The EDD designation makes the Eastern Shore of Virginia eligible for EDA funding for area projects, including the Wallops Research Park and new telecommunications infrastructure. For more information please contact Barbara Schwenk at 757-787-2936 x115 or check our webpage at www.a-npdc.org/CEDS.html. The webpage is updated frequently, and the study will be posted there as soon as it is available.

This Issue

Reducing Lead Hazards in Eastern Shore Homes

Next Steps for Economic Development

Celebrating Fair Housing Month - April

Northampton County Applies for Housing Funds

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Celebrating Fair Housing Month-April

The enactment of the Federal Fair Housing Act on April 11, 1968 came after a long and difficult journey. From 1966-1967, Congress considered the fair housing bill, but failed to garner a strong enough majority for its passage. However, when the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson urged for the bill's speedy Congressional approval. Since the 1966 open housing marches in Chicago, Dr. King's name had been closely associated with fair housing legislation. President Johnson viewed the Act as a fitting memorial to King's life work.

Another significant issue during the 1960's was the growing casualty list from Vietnam. Deaths in Vietnam fell heaviest upon young, poor African-American and Hispanic infantrymen. These men's families could not purchase or rent homes in certain residential developments on account of their race or national origin. Specialized organizations like the NAACP, the GI Forum and the National Committee Against Discrimination In Housing lobbied for the Senate to pass the Fair Housing Act and remedy this inequity. Massachusetts Senators Brooke and Kennedy argued for its passage. Senator Brooke, the first African-American senator to be elected by popular vote, spoke of his

return from World War II and inability to provide a home of his choice for his family because of his race.

With cities rioting after Dr. King's assassination, and destruction mounting in every part of the United States, the House of Representatives finally passed the Fair Housing Act. Without debate, the Senate followed the House in its passage, and President Johnson signed the Act into law.

The power to appoint the first officials administering the Act fell to President Nixon. Nixon tapped then Governor of Michigan, George Romney, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. While serving as Governor, Secretary Romney had successfully campaigned for ratification of a state constitutional provision prohibiting housing discrimination. President Nixon also appointed Samuel Simmons as the first Assistant Secretary for Equal Housing Opportunity.

Within the inaugural year, Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) completed the Title VIII Field Operations Handbook, and instituted a formalized complaint process. In April 1969, HUD celebrated the Act's 1st Anniversary, hosting a gala event in the Grand Ballroom of New York's Plaza Hotel; advocates and politicians nationwide shared in the celebration.

In subsequent years, the tradition of celebrating Fair Housing Month grew larger and larger. Governors began to issue proclamations that designated April as "Fair Housing Month," and schools across the country sponsored poster and essay contests that focused upon fair housing issues. Regional winners from these contests often enjoyed trips to Washington, DC for events with HUD and their Congressional representatives.

The Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation is the state agency responsible for enforcing fair housing laws through the Virginia Fair Housing Office. Many localities across the state will sponsor fair housing events during the month of April. The Richmond office of the HUD will host a fair housing conference on April 19th. For more information call (800) 842-2610.

A-NRHA staff administering the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program regularly discuss fair housing issues with applicants and distribute information as part of their briefing packets; Fair Housing posters are displayed in staff offices. This month, additional bi-lingual posters and printed materials will be placed in the lobby along with information regarding local fair housing celebrations.

Northampton County Applies for Housing Funds

Northampton County has submitted an application to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development for Community Development Block Grant Funds to implement a housing rehabilitation project for the West Fairview area. The West Fairview Housing Rehabilitation Grant would include all areas of Fairview not covered by the 2000 East Fairview CDBG. The application requests \$592,400 in CDBG funds to rehabilitate 5 occupied

houses and replace 7 occupied, unrepairable houses, including 2 with no indoor plumbing.

Each year rural localities from across the State compete for a limited amount of CDBG funds. DHCD's ranking criteria includes comparing the amount of other funds claimed by the proposals, the capacity of the localities to implement the projects, and how the projects will provide benefits to low and moderate-income persons. The Governors'

office usually announces which proposals will be offered funding in late June or early July of each year.



Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Ground Water Study Committee, in cooperation with Accomack and Northampton Counties, the A-NPDC, the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation will offer a Household Hazardous Waste Collection from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM on Saturday, April 28, 2007 in Oak Hall, Virginia at the **south end** of Arcadia High School's **parking lot** on Horsey Road. Collection sites will alternate biannually in Accomack and Northampton County. Eastern Shore residents will have the opportunity to dispose of their materials legally rather than disposing of them in ways that harm the environment. Householders who pre-register can dispose of up to 30 pounds of hazardous waste for free; Additional waste can be disposed of for 99 cents per pound.

Items to be collected include leftover garden chemicals, poisons, repel-

lants, degreasers, fuels (gasoline and kerosene) fungicides, wood preservatives, paint products, wood stain, paint thinner, paint remover, driveway sealers, epoxy, rodent poison, asbestos, and other hazardous waste. *No commercial or industrial waste, car batteries, tires, motor oil, ammunition, flares, explosives, medical waste, biological waste, radioactive waste, medicines, PCBs, smoke detectors, freon, propane tanks, or empty containers of any kind will be accepted. Batteries, motor oil, and tires are accepted at both Accomack and Northampton County Landfills and convenience centers in both counties will accept some of those items.* A representative from the Eastern Shore Food Bank will be on hand to accept useable paint.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Leslie Mason, 757-787-2936, ext 127, or email at lmason@a-npdc.org.



How to Contact the A-NPDC

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