



COUNTY OF POLK  
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[www.polkcountyiowa.gov/health](http://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/health)

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## Polk County Health Department News Release

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### New Grant to Address Lead Hazards Awarded to Polk County

Polk County was recently awarded a \$2,475,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to address lead-based paint hazards in Polk County and Dallas County. Funding is also available to address additional indoor health hazards like mold, radon and pests in some of the homes. These funds will leverage over \$2 million in additional local funds to allow Polk County Health Department, and their partners, to repair 142 homes in the two counties over the next three years..

Terri Henkels, Polk County Health Department Director said, “This grant will allow us to continue to address lead poisoning in our community and fix a lot more homes. But most importantly, we will reduce the number of children who get lead poisoned.”

This is the second lead hazard control grant that has been awarded from HUD to Polk County. One hundred forty-three units (to date) have been made lead-safe through the initial grant. These units are listed in the Polk County Lead Safe Registry <http://www.metroleadsafe.org/lead-safe-registry.aspx>

“Wherever we find lead, we usually find additional health hazards, like pests, radon or mold,. This grant will allow us to address some of those issues as well as the lead,” said Ms. Henkels.

Lead paint, which was banned from residential use in 1978, is the primary source of lead poisoning in Iowa. Two-thirds of Des Moines’ housing stock was built before 1978.

“These funds will allow us to enhance our pro-active strategy to reduce lead poisoning. We will conduct outreach to identify homes with lead hazards. We will fix the homes and we will reduce the risk that the children in 142 homes will become lead poisoned,” said Ms. Henkels.

Funds are available to assist homeowners whose income is less than 80% of the median family income and landlords whose tenants’ incomes are less than 80% of the median family income. In addition, to be eligible a child under the age of six years old must live, or spend significant time, in the home and there must be identified lead hazards. For more information call 286-2115 or 286-3596.