

In the News -



[The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recently reported that portable generators were linked to more than 85% of non-fire CO deaths associated with engine-driven tools. CPSC also found that African-Americans died at nearly twice their proportion of the populations.](#)



[The University of Maryland School of Public Health is conducting a review of possible health impacts from the development of Marcellus Shale in Maryland. The project is a part of the Maryland Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Initiative.](#)



[The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene recently reduced a number of fees associated with some of its programs, including swimming pools and spas, summer youth camps, and some food licenses.](#)

From the Director

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Environmental Health Bureau works with federal, state, local, and non-governmental partners to ensure Marylanders have safe food, safe housing, safe places to play and work, and safe means of getting from place to place. The Bureau's approximately 50 employees work to reduce environmental hazards, and this year we are emphasizing health and safety in the home environment. This newsletter and other activities throughout the year will focus on known threats in the home, such as lead paint, radon, slip and trip hazards, and carbon monoxide. We will also talk about efforts to reduce the impact of environmental triggers on conditions such as asthma. We look forward to sharing these stories with you, and to responding to your concerns and questions.

Clifford S. Mitchell, MS, MD, MPH

More Stories of Interest

Public Health, Energy & Climate Change — [A Survey of Maryland Residents / Summer 2013](#) The survey, funded by the town Creek Foundation, is the first comprehensive survey of Maryland residents to find out what they think about the public health impacts of climate change.

[Rape and Sexual Assault Prevention](#) Conference Focuses on Women of Color



The Rape and Sexual Assault Prevention Program, along with the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Bowie State University, co-sponsored the annual MCASA Women of Color Network Conference on Thursday, October 17, 2013 Bowie State University.

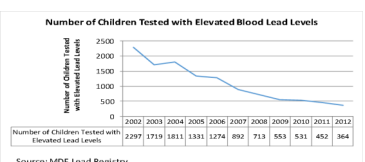
Speakers from across the country presented on topics including:

- * Internalizing Oppression and Silence in Communities of Color
- * Elevating the Voices of Survivors of Trauma and Violence
- * The Neurobiology of Trauma
- * Providing a Voice to Professional Women of Color

For more information about upcoming events and trainings, as well as resources for rape and sexual assault prevention, contact dhmh.envhealth@maryland.gov

CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING IN MARYLAND: MUCH PROGRESS, STILL WORK TO DO

Maryland has made great progress in reducing childhood lead poisoning, as you can see in the graph to the right. The annual number of lead poisoned children has gone from more than 2,000 annually a dozen years ago, to fewer than 400. But there are still children poisoned every year, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has also recognized that the previous "level of concern" of 10 micrograms/deciliter should be reduced to a new population reference level of 5 micrograms/deciliter. This means that there will be more children identified in Maryland whose parents will have questions for health care providers about the meaning of blood lead levels. To answer these questions, DHMH and the [Maryland Department of the Environment](#) will be reaching out to health care providers and non-governmental organizations across the State, to answer questions about what the new recommendations are, how cases should be managed, and other questions.



MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL SUMMIT ON PEDIATRIC ASTHMA

The Environmental Health Bureau co-sponsored a regional summit on asthma. The Regional Summit on Pediatric Home Asthma Interventions took place on January 17, 2014 with 82 attendees. The Summit was co-sponsored by the [Maryland Asthma Control Program](#) and the University of Maryland School of Nursing. Along with Federal partners such as HUD, EPA and CDC, asthma programs, insurers, providers, and advocacy groups the day long conference focused its discussions on the current landscape of reimbursement for asthma services.

Over the course of the day, participants listened, discussed and engaged in issues surrounding the driving questions of the day :

- * What is the evidence base for environmental home interventions and who should be responsible for the reimbursement of these interventions?
- * How can asthma programs in the Baltimore area effectively engage state Medicaid offices and relevant private payers to advance reimbursement for asthma service

Follow up discussions and meeting will take place with attendees to determine the best route for reimbursement for asthma services in Maryland and throughout the country.