



General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Joint State Government Commission

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Report Summary in response to Senate Resolution 33 of 2017

LEAD EXPOSURE RISKS AND RESPONSES IN PENNSYLVANIA:

Report of the Advisory Committee and Task Force on Lead Exposure

In 2016, the news broke that people living in Flint, Michigan had been exposed to dangerously high levels of lead through their drinking water system. As the role of aging infrastructure emerged as one of the many factors contributing to this health crisis, Pennsylvania's lawmakers and others living and working in Pennsylvania became increasingly concerned that the homes and drinking water systems in their communities might be susceptible to the combination of human error and aging, deteriorated properties that plagued Flint. Accordingly, Senate Resolution 33 of 2017 (Printer's No. 749) was adopted on June 6, 2017.

The resolution called for the appointment of an advisory committee consisting of governmental officials, medical professionals, and representatives of water company municipal health departments, school districts, housing authorities, persons certified to remediate lead and parents and advocates. The resolution called for a comprehensive review and analysis of laws, regulations, policies and procedures of the Commonwealth and other states regarding an assessment of lead exposure as a public health concern, assessments of the age of Pennsylvania's housing, schools, daycares and public drinking water systems, and a report of the advisory committee containing recommendations for changes to those statutes, regulations, practices, policies and procedures.

The Centers for Disease Control have concluded that there is no safe level of lead in the blood stream, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health has declared that the entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is "at risk" for lead exposure. Research for this report has confirmed that every county in Pennsylvania has some homes, schools, daycares or drinking water systems that contain risks of lead exposure. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee makes the following recommendations, all geared toward creating a lead-safe environment for the children of Pennsylvania:

- Require universal blood screenings for children
- Mandate inspections/certifications of child-care facilities and facilities with vulnerable populations
- Ensure safe housing is available to families through a residential rental property certification program
- Establish a statewide rental housing registry
- Establish a lead abatement grant program to assist property owners in conducting lead abatement
- Establish an interagency council to coordinate implementation of lead prevention programs and policies among the relevant state agencies
- Require all school drinking water systems to be inspected and certified
- Clarify plumbing system lead ban
- Permit municipal authorities operating public drinking water systems to replace lateral lead service lines.
- Require lead service line replacements and restrict partial lead water service line replacements
- Adopt the Uniform Property Maintenance Code
- Provide guidance on private well construction