



- HOME NEWS BUSINESS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT TRAVEL LIVING FORUMS SHOP JOBS AUTOS REAL ESTATE CLASSIFIEDS

MLive.com - Blogs

SEARCH:

Latest News Muskegon Chronicle

- [RSS](#) | What's RSS?
- Latest Posts**
- Senior housing complex takes step forward
- Expert: Even tiny lead levels endanger kids
- Bush signs agreement to protect Great Lakes water
- Family and Faith Calendar, Week of Oct. 4
- Financial meltdown locks up \$23 million fund for Grand Valley State University

- Categories**
- 2008 North American International Auto Show (RSS)
 - Allendale/GVSU (RSS)
 - Amtrak train crash (RSS)
 - Audio (RSS)
 - Baker College (RSS)
 - Breaking News (RSS)
 - Business (RSS)
 - Calendars (RSS)
 - Community News (RSS)
 - Coopersville (RSS)
 - Court News (RSS)
 - Dalton Township (RSS)
 - Drug Addiction: Tough To Crack (RSS)
 - Education (RSS)
 - Election News (RSS)
 - Elections Statewide (RSS)
 - Entertainment (RSS)
 - Environment (RSS)
 - Family and Faith (RSS)
 - Ferrysburg (RSS)
 - Fruitport (RSS)
 - Fruitport Township (RSS)
 - GM, Ford and Chrysler (RSS)
 - GM-UAW (RSS)
 - Grand Haven (RSS)
 - Grand Haven Township (RSS)
 - Grand Rapids (RSS)
 - GVSU/Grand Rapids (RSS)
 - High School Football 2008 (RSS)
 - Holland (RSS)
 - Holton (RSS)
 - Hospital merger (RSS)
 - Janet Chandler murder trial (RSS)
 - Karim Ahmad (RSS)
 - Kent County (RSS)
 - Live chat (RSS)
 - Ludington (RSS)
 - Marine Pfc. Brett Witteveen (RSS)
 - Mason County (RSS)
 - Michael Hoeker (RSS)
 - Michigan (RSS)
 - Michigan International Auto Show (RSS)
 - Michigan Irish Music Festival (RSS)
 - Michigan State (RSS)
 - Muskegon (RSS)
 - Muskegon Community College (RSS)
 - Muskegon County (RSS)
 - Muskegon Heights (RSS)
 - Muskegon schools (RSS)

Expert: Even tiny lead levels endanger kids

Posted by [Jeff Alexander](#) | [The Muskegon Chronicle](#) October 04, 2008 06:28AM
Children with any amount of lead in their blood may suffer irreversible health effects, a fact that underscores the need to keep kids from coming in contact with the toxic metal, according to an expert on the subject.

Dr. Dan Hryhorczuk, a professor of public health at the University of Illinois-Chicago, told government officials from several Muskegon County communities Friday that they should take all measures possible to prevent childhood lead exposure.

"There is no safe level of lead in the blood in terms of effects on the brain," Hryhorczuk said. "Any amount of lead has the potential to affect neurobehavioral performance."

Hryhorczuk, who directs the University of Illinois-Chicago's Great Lakes Centers for Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health, was the featured speaker Friday at the Muskegon Community Lead Awareness and Public Policy Seminar.

Muskegon and Muskegon Heights are among 14 Michigan communities where children are considered at high risk of lead poisoning due to those cities' aging housing stocks. Homes built before 1978, when the U.S. banned the use of lead paint in residential structures, are at increased risk of lead poisoning, according to health officials.

Lead paint chips and dust from lead paint are, by far, the leading cause of lead poisoning in children. Childhood lead poisoning costs the nation \$43 billion annually, far exceeding the costs associated with childhood asthma or cancer, Hryhorczuk said.

Officials at the Muskegon County Health Department have been working with local communities and groups from other parts of the state to increase efforts to prevent childhood lead poisoning.

"This is about not waiting for the child to be poisoned by lead before we fix the house," said Jill Montgomery-Keast, a public health quality improvement specialist with the Muskegon County Health Department. "We want to turn that around. We want to fix houses (with lead hazards) so we don't have to worry about the child."

Hryhorczuk said preventing lead poisoning costs much less than treating children who suffer its ill effects.

The city of Muskegon was awarded a \$2.1 million federal grant last year to remove lead paint hazards from 204 homes. The houses targeted for work are home to children under age 6 who have tested for elevated levels of lead.

Excessive lead exposure can lead to a variety of health problems in young children, including learning disabilities, lower IQs, delayed development, reduced height and hearing impairment. At high levels, lead affects the central nervous system, causing convulsions, coma, and even death.

According to government data, 6,057 homes were built in Muskegon from 1940 to 1959. Another 4,992 were built prior to 1940.

Homes built prior to 1950 are especially at risk, because more lead paint was used during that era.

Public health officials have long believed that children would not suffer permanent effects if the concentration of lead in their blood remained below 10 micrograms per deciliter of blood.

Hryhorczuk said recent studies have shown that children with less than 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood suffer from lower IQs. New research also found that it is nearly impossible to remove lead from a child's body once it gets in

CONTESTS
[Contests and Games](#)
[Click Here](#)

FROM OUR ADVERTISERS

- [Search](#)
- [Foreclosures](#)
- [See coupons and values for local businesses. Click here!](#)

- Muskegon Summer Celebration 2008 (RSS)
- Muskegon Township (RSS)
- Newaygo County (RSS)
- Norton Shores (RSS)
- Oceana County (RSS)
- Ottawa County (RSS)
- Photo gallery (RSS)
- Primary Candidate Profiles (RSS)
- Regional News (RSS)
- Roadwork (RSS)
- Roosevelt Park (RSS)
- ROTHBURY (RSS)
- ROTHBURY photo galleries (RSS)
- School elections (RSS)
- Sewer break (RSS)
- Sgt. Todd A. Singleton (RSS)
- Sieradzki (RSS)
- Slideshow (RSS)
- Sports News (RSS)
- Spring Lake (RSS)
- State News (RSS)
- Tigers (RSS)
- Top Photos (RSS)
- Top Picks (RSS)
- Top ROTHBURY (RSS)
- Top Stories (RSS)
- Tri-Cities (RSS)
- Unity 2008 (RSS)
- Updates (RSS)
- Video (RSS)
- Wayne Lee Stevens (RSS)
- Weather (RSS)
- West Michigan (RSS)
- Whitehall/Montague (RSS)

Favorite Links

- Muskegon Chronicle Home

Archived Posts

-

the brain or bones.

"We were thinking that anything below 10 was sort of OK because 10 was the level of concern," Hryhorczuk said. "The whole idea of a safe blood level is really challenged by this new data."

Last year, 53 children in Muskegon County had lead levels above 10 micrograms per deciliter of blood, down from 194 a decade ago, according to government data.

"We're headed in the right direction," said Paul Haan, executive director of the Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan.

[Print This Page](#) | [Send To A Friend](#) | [Permalink \(Learn More\)](#)
Share: [Reddit](#) | [Digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [Google](#) | [Yahoo](#) | [Facebook](#) | [What is this?](#)

COMMENTS (0)

[Post a comment](#)

Username (Don't Have a Username? [Sign up here](#)):

Password: _____

Remember Me

Use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#).

[Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site. [Contact interactivity management](#).

© 2008 [mlive.com](#). All Rights Reserved. [RSS Feeds](#) | [Complete Index](#)