



## Building Capacity to Support Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention

### What is the issue?

In 2018, the Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network tested 25% of children <6 years of age and reported 29 children had elevated blood lead levels (>5ug/dL). Lead paint in old housing stock was likely a significant source of lead exposure, with more than 80% of Sullivan County's housing units being built prior to 1978 and nearly 30% built prior to 1950. For the past several years, the City of Claremont has put a spotlight on reducing lead hazards, including replacing large amounts of lead piping in the water system and helping homeowners replace feeder lines from the public water system into homes.

### What did the NH Tracking Program do?

The NH Tracking Program funded a 3-year capacity building grant with the Greater Sullivan County Regional Public Health Network and Sullivan County to develop new approaches to combat childhood lead poisoning. In the first grant year, activities included developing a mini-module on lead safe practices implemented at local Trade Schools and sponsoring several contractors to take lead-safe training. In the second grant year, activities included helping the team evaluate existing lead abatement funding opportunities which led to the realization that a large federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant was the best way to make meaningful progress towards eradicating lead hazards. In the third grant year, activities will include implementation of lead remediation in approximately 60 housing units with funds awarded from the HUD grant.

### How did it improve public health?

With the initial \$25K mini grant from the NH Tracking Program, Sullivan County was able to build effective partnerships and lay the groundwork for reducing lead hazards among the county's older housing stock by sponsoring lead-safe training among contractors. The county hired a grant writer who worked to submit a HUD Grant Application. In the summer of 2020, Sullivan County was awarded a \$1,703,524 from HUD to eliminate lead-based paint hazards for low income families within a timeframe of 42 months to complete the work.

The grant caps off a multiyear effort to build environmental health capacity and develop new approaches to combat childhood lead poisoning and improve the county's housing stock. It will protect families, especially those with young children, who have low household income and who live in housing with a high risk of lead exposure.



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