

**JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE**

Public Health Facility, 531 Meade Street, Watertown, New York 13601

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October 20, 2025

**Jefferson County Public Health Service Observes
National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 19-25, 2025**

Watertown, NY – The Jefferson County Public Health Service (JCPHS) is pleased to recognize National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 19-25, 2025. JCPHS will participate in outreach activities to help raise local awareness about the risks of lead exposure, educate parents and communities on how to reduce lead hazards in the environment to prevent its serious health effects, and encourage appropriate lead testing in children.

Local outreach activities and events for the weeklong observance include:

- No-cost lead testing of toys and other small household items at Watertown Urban Mission on Tuesday, October 21 1:00 – 4:00pm and at JCPHS on Thursday, October 23 10:00am – 1:00pm. Both events are open to the public with no appointment required. The first 20 participants at each event will receive wet-cleaning supplies to help reduce lead dust within their homes.
- Recognition of North Star Pediatrics for diligently adhering to New York State Public Health guidance and becoming the highest performing medical practice in testing rates of lead blood levels of children ages 1 and 2 in Jefferson County.
- *Happy, Healthy, Lead-Free Me* StoryWalk® is installed at the playground at Thompson Park in Watertown and will be available through the fall.
- Encourage landlords and contractors to become EPA certified in lead-safe renovation, painting and repair in preparation of the [Lead Rental Registry Program](#), which goes into effect later this year and lists the City of Watertown as a community of concern.
- Partnering with North Country Perinatal/Prenatal Council's Family Opportunity Center to exhibit our interactive lead poisoning prevention display.

Lead can be found inside and outside the home, including in the water that travels through lead pipes or in the soil around the house. However, the most common source of exposure for children is from lead-based paint, which was used in many homes built before 1978. Jefferson County has a large percentage of older housing stock. Approximately 75% of homes in Jefferson County were built prior to the ban on lead-based paint and as a result, may contain lead hazards.

Adults and children can get lead into their bodies by breathing in lead dust (especially during activities such as renovations, repairs, or painting) or by swallowing lead dust that settles in food, food preparation surfaces, floors, windowsills, eating paint chips, soil that contains lead, or other places. Children can also become exposed to lead dust from adults' jobs or hobbies and from some metal toys or toys painted with lead-based paint.

Most children have had some contact with lead in old paint, soil, plumbing, or another source. This is why New York State requires health care providers to test all children with a blood lead test at age 1 year and again at age 2 years. Children's blood lead levels tend to increase from 6 to 12 months of age and tend to peak at 18 to 24 months of age. For more information on how to protect your family from lead, please visit www.jcphs.org.

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