



JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

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October 23, 2026

Jefferson County Public Health Service Observes National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 25-31, 2026

Watertown, NY – The Jefferson County Public Health Service (JCPHS) is happy to recognize National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 25 – 31, 2026. JCPHS will participate in community outreach activities throughout the week to help raise awareness of the health risks of lead exposure, educate the public on reducing environmental hazards, and encourage appropriate lead testing in children.

Local outreach activities and events during the weeklong observance include:

- No-cost lead testing of toys and other small household items at JCPHS on Wednesday, October 28 from 9:00am to 11:00am. Open to the public with no appointment required. The first 20 participants will receive wet-cleaning supplies to help reduce lead dust within their homes.
- Participate in multiple Halloween-themed events hosted by local community partners, including Boo at the Zoo at Zoo New York, the Child Fatality Review Team Trunk or Treat at the county office building parking lot, Community Action Planning Council's Fall Fest, Mall-o-ween at Salmon Run Mall, the Burrville Power Trunk or Treat and the SPCA Trunk or Treat.
- *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 response to the New York State Lead Rental Registry Program, which designates the City of Watertown as a community of concern.
- Partnering with Salmon Run Mall, who will exhibit our interactive lead poisoning prevention display throughout the week.

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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