

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**DOH DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH RECEIVES \$60,000 GRANT FROM  
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

*-- Grant to Enhance Efforts to Eliminate Childhood Lead Poisoning by 2010 --*

**TALLAHASSEE** – Today, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded a one-year grant of \$60,000 to the DOH Division of Environmental Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.

Over 3,000 new cases of childhood lead poisoning have occurred in the state of Florida since 2000, with over 470 new cases identified in 2004 alone. The grant will help the state establish an EPA accredited Lead-Based Paint Training and Certification Program to increase the number of trained and certified lead abatement and risk assessors in the state.

“This support for the Department's lead poisoning prevention efforts extends our commitment to expand efforts to reach the 2010 goal of eliminating childhood lead poisoning,” said DOH Secretary M. Rony François, M.D., M.S.P.H., Ph.D. “A skilled work force trained for lead identification and remediation is essential to the protection of Florida's children from this preventable health threat.”

Even at low levels, lead exposure can cause growth, learning, development and behavioral problems for young children. Lead dust from old paint and contaminated soil in and around older homes remains the primary exposure threat to children. All children under the age of 72 months are potentially at risk for lead poisoning due to their hand-to-mouth activity.

Over the next year, the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program will collaborate with Florida's Committee for the Elimination of Childhood Lead Poisoning, which includes members from universities, non-profit organizations, and federal, state and local public agencies, to accomplish the following goals:

- Establish an EPA accredited Lead Based Paint Training and Certification Program in the state of Florida, and
- Increase the number of certified individuals, contractor firms and accredited training providers in the state to provide lead identification and remediation services to families with lead poisoned children.

The mission of the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) is to protect the health and cognitive development of all children living in Florida by minimizing childhood exposure to all lead hazards. With support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the EPA, Florida's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program works with stakeholders and partners at the federal, state and local level to assist families affected by childhood lead poisoning and to prevent future cases. The program's efforts are linked closely with the Health People 2010 goal of eliminating childhood lead poisoning. For more information, please visit the DOH Web site at [www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/lead/index.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/lead/index.html).

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