



FACT SHEET

Strategy to Reduce Lead Exposures and Disparities in U.S. Communities October 2022

Website: <https://www.epa.gov/lead/final-strategy-reduce-lead-exposures-and-disparities-us-communities>

What is the *Strategy to Reduce Lead Exposures and Disparities in U.S. Communities*?

The *Strategy to Reduce Lead Exposures and Disparities in U.S. Communities* (Lead Strategy) lays out U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-wide and government-wide approaches to strengthen public health protections, address legacy lead contamination for communities with the greatest exposures, and promote environmental justice.

The Lead Strategy builds on the goals laid out in a government-wide 2018 Federal Lead Action Plan¹ and supports the *Executive Order on Advancing Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*.² The Lead Strategy also reflects EPA's commitment to fulfilling the Biden-Harris Administration's historic commitment of resources to replace lead pipes and support lead paint removal under the Lead Pipe and Paint Action Plan.³

Why is the *Strategy to Reduce Lead Exposures and Disparities in U.S. Communities* important?

Ongoing exposures to lead in the environment present a health risk to too many people nationwide. Very low levels of lead in children's blood have been linked to adverse effects on intellect, concentration, and academic achievement.⁴ The U.S. has made substantial progress in reducing lead exposure, but significant disparities remain along racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines. For example, Black children and those from low-income households have persistently been found to have higher blood lead levels than non-Hispanic white children and those from higher income households.⁵ EPA developed the Lead Strategy to focus on eliminating these disparities by taking targeted actions to prevent childhood exposures that could lead to lifelong health effects and barriers to social and economic well-being.



The Lead Strategy identifies four goals and commits to take various actions to address key

¹ https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-12/documents/fedactionplan_lead_final.pdf

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government/>

³ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/16/fact-sheet-the-biden-harris-lead-pipe-and-paint-action-plan/>

⁴ Environmental Protection Agency, Integrated Science Assessment for Lead (2013): <https://www.epa.gov/isa/integrated-science-assessment-isa-lead>

⁵ Egan et al. (2021) Env. Health Pers. <https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP7932>

problems that contribute to lead exposure in communities. The goals are:

- Goal 1: Reduce Community Exposures to Lead Sources,
- Goal 2: Identify Lead-Exposed Communities and Improve Their Health Outcomes,
- Goal 3: Communicate More Effectively with Stakeholders, and
- Goal 4: Support and Conduct Critical Research to Inform Efforts to Reduce Lead Exposures and Related Health Risks.

The Lead Strategy defines challenges to achieving each of these goals and identifies actions the Agency will take to address them. Despite great progress over the past few decades to reduce lead exposure, EPA still has important work to do, especially in communities already burdened by pollution and other stressors. Exposure sources and pathways for lead are complex and numerous, including lead-based paint, house dust, drinking water, soil, and air. Exposures can be greatest and pose significant health risks to young children, who may also be exposed in utero. Working locally, nationally, and with a whole of government approach, EPA is determined to take ambitious actions that follow the science and advance justice and equity to rid communities of harmful lead exposure and resulting toxic effects.

For more information about the Lead Strategy, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/lead/final-strategy-reduce-lead-exposures-and-disparities-us-communities>

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