

2011 NATIONAL HEALTHY HOMES CONFERENCE FACTS ON COMMON RESIDENTIAL HEALTH HAZARDS



The 2011 National Healthy Homes Conference program will address some of the most common health hazards that threaten the well-being of millions of Americans in their homes. Some of these hazards are:

Radon

- Eight million U.S. homes have radon levels above the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) recommended action level.
- Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers, accounting for about 21,000 cases annually.

Secondhand smoke

- Secondhand smoke results in about 3,400 lung cancer deaths in non-smoking adults.
- It is responsible for increases in the number and severity of asthma attacks in about 200,000 to 1 million children who have asthma. The home is the most common setting where children are exposed to second hand smoke.
- Is also responsible for an estimated 46,000 deaths from heart disease in non-smokers who live with smokers.

Lead

- According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an estimated 38 million housing units still contain lead-based paint.
- Lead-based paint is found in homes built before 1978. Lead-contaminated dust is the primary cause of lead exposure and can lead to a variety of health problems in young children, including reduced IQ, learning disabilities, developmental delays, reduced height, and impaired hearing.
- About 250,000 children younger than age 6 have elevated blood lead levels today.

Asthma

- Nearly one in 12 Americans now have asthma, bringing the total number of people in the United States with asthma today up to 25 million.
- Today an average of one out of every ten school age children in America has asthma, making it the most common chronic childhood disease.
- Asthma is responsible for 14 million absences from school each year and reigns as the leading cause of childhood hospitalizations.
- 90% of children with asthma can attribute their asthma attacks to items found in the home, including pollen, dust mites, pests, mold, and animal dander.

Home Injuries

- In addition to the chronic health impacts of unhealthy housing such as lead poisoning, asthma, and cancer, unsafe housing conditions also result in unintentional injuries for millions of people of all ages.
- According to the CDC, unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death in all children ages 1-21.
- Fires and burns, drowning, suffocation, choking, falls, and poisoning rank among the leading causes of unintentional injury in the home.

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