

BOARD OF COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE
NEWS ADVISORY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lead Task Force Requests Community Feedback

GRAND RAPIDS – The Kent County Lead Task Force (KCLTF) created a draft of recommendations for the Board of Commissioners to consider regarding the public health threat caused by lead. Members are committed to hearing voices throughout the community, seeking input on the recommendations through two meetings and an online survey.

You can read the recommendations at www.accessKent.com/lead. On that page, there is an option to take a survey based on the various recommendations of the KCLTF, as well as a chance to become a volunteer advocate in your community. The survey will remain open until Sunday, December 3, 2017.

Two public meetings are planned in the zip codes hardest hit by lead:

Thursday, November 30, 2017 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Sheldon Complex 121 Franklin SE Grand Rapids, MI 49507	Friday, December 1, 2017 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. MSU Extension 775 Ball NE Grand Rapids, MI 49503
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Board Chair Jim Saalfeld formed the Lead Task Force in September 2016 to investigate the issue and seek solutions to lead poisoning in children. One zip code in Grand Rapids led the state for the highest number of lead-poisoned children in 2015 according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services: 49507 (south of Franklin, east of US-131, north of 28th Street). Four out of five homes in Grand Rapids, and nearly three out of five homes in Kent County, were built before 1978, the year lead was banned from paint.

The Lead Task Force, chaired by County Commissioner Emily Brieve and Vice-Chair Senita Leneer (Commissioner, City of Grand Rapids) includes about twenty community leaders, as well as health and housing specialists. Lead poisoning can cause permanent, irreversible damage to many organs, including the heart, brain, and liver. It's also linked to lower IQs, hyperactivity, and aggressive behavior. The CDC estimates that nearly half a million children in the US have elevated blood lead levels (a blood lead level of 5 micrograms per deciliter or higher).

The Lead Task Force plans to have a report complete by the end of the year.

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