

HEALTH

Local Health Hurt by Environment

Bad air, lead paint and mold part of problem

Residents of affordable housing properties in Humboldt, Vernon, Eliot, King, and Boise neighborhoods are worried about poor indoor air quality, exposure to lead-based paint, littered grounds and mold and mildew.

The concerns were expressed in in-

terviews in north and northeast Portland over the past two years by the Multnomah County Environmental Health and the Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health coalition.

The next step is an action plan focusing

on public education and policy changes for housing standards in north and northeast Portland.

"We are proud of the partnerships and the identified strategies for addressing the concerns," says Lillian Shirley, director of Multnomah County Health Department. "Our focus is on collaborating with the community to support and respond to the issues."

According to a 2001 survey conducted in neighborhoods surrounding the north and northeast I-5 corridor,

14.7 percent of the 587 residents surveyed currently had asthma, more than double the 2001 national average. Breathing polluted air may worsen asthma symptoms.

In 2001, 71% of homes in Multnomah County had composite lead dust levels that exceeded federal standards with 61 confirmed childhood lead poisoning cases. Exposure to lead-based paints and lead dust from such paints can cause learning disabilities and neurological damage in young children.

A neighborhood event for community members to learn more about the impact of the environment on health and actions to make neighborhoods safer and healthier places to live will be held Saturday, Oct. 1 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center and Patton Park on North Interstate Avenue.

For more information on this neighborhood event, visit the website www.paceh.org or contact Andrea Greiling at 503-988-3663, extension 22551.

More People Lack Health Insurance

Oregon poverty also increases

(AP)—More Oregonians lack health insurance and more residents of the state are in poverty, according to a new Census report.

About 17 percent of the state's population does not have health coverage, compared to 16 percent in 2002-03. Nationally, about 16 percent of the population goes without medical insurance.

State spending cuts have sharply pared the Oregon Health Plan, the state's supplemental Medicaid coverage mainly for the working poor. Many people also don't qualify for regular Medicaid, which mostly covers the elderly, children and pregnant women.

"I have anxiety attacks. The pills for that are \$175 for a month's

worth," Orma DiNorma, 50, a Salem babysitter said. "I have teeth that are falling apart, but I can't pay to fix them. There is no recourse."

About 600,000 Oregonians went without health insurance in 2004, the federal Census report says.

Maribeth Healey, executive director of Oregonians for Health Security, said Oregon's increasing percentage of people without health coverage is no surprise.

The Health Plan enrolls around 100,000 fewer people than in 2001, due mostly to budget cuts as lawmakers struggled with declining tax revenue in the recent recession.

And private sector workers are losing coverage, Healey said — 80,000 in Oregon in the past two years.

The Census said about 12 percent of Oregonians had incomes below the federal poverty line in

2003-04, up from 11.7 percent in 2002-03.

The national poverty rate rose from 12.3 percent to 12.6 percent in the same period.

For 2004, the federal government defined poverty generally as an annual income of less than \$9,645 for a single person, \$12,334 for a two-person household or \$19,307 for a household of four.

The Oregon Center for Public Policy, a group that works for policies to help low and middle-income Oregonians, said the new data show that Oregon's median household income of \$41,971 in 2003-04 was down from \$46,333 in 1999-01, before the economic downturn, after adjusting for inflation.

"The typical Oregon household is sliding backward while the economy moves forward," said Chuck Sheketoff, the center's executive director.



Raven McClendon (right) and Ellie Mullen learn lifesaving skills at a Babysitter's Training Course offered by the American Red Cross Oregon Trail Chapter.

Youth Learn Childcare Basics

Many teens looking after their younger siblings may know how to keep the kids busy, but might find themselves scrambling in the unfortunate event of an emergency.

This is why the American Red Cross Oregon Trail has been hosting Babysitter's

Training classes at various local schools, teaching youth ages 11 to 15 the skills needed to practice responsible childcare.

The comprehensive course covers first aid techniques, rescue breathing and other types of emergency supervision. Child development, infant care

and accident prevention are also taught in the day-long session.

For a full list of upcoming dates, times and locations that the course is being offered, visit the web at www.redcross-pdx.org or call Daniel Soule at 503-528-5639.



Dr. Andrew Lum

Kaiser Hires Medical Director

Dr. Andrew Lum has been named medical director for the northwest region of Kaiser Permanente, representing 778 other Kaiser doctors.

Lum, a board-certified internal medicine physician, works out of Kaiser's administration offices at 500 N.E. Multnomah St.

Most recently he was associate medical director for primary care and service with Kaiser Permanente's Colorado medical group. While there, he helped launch an electronic clinical information system and a mentoring program to develop physician leaders.

YOU'RE INVITED!

OCTOBER 1st 11:00 am- 4:00 pm
Our Environment, Our Health
A N/NE Portland Neighborhood Gathering

Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center (IFCC) and Patton Park
5340 North Interstate Avenue
(MAX Yellow Line - Interstate/Killingsworth Stop)

You can learn more about making your home and neighborhood safer places to live. Learn about asthma, mold/mildew, air pollution, lead safety, recycling, and more!

FREE!

- ◆ Food
- ◆ Storytelling
- ◆ IFCC Art Gallery
- ◆ Prizes
- ◆ Blood pressure, asthma, and lead screenings!
- ◆ Oregon Health Plan sign-up

Featuring Music and Spoken Word by:

- ◆ N'Touch
- ◆ Motown Review
- ◆ Highland Gospel Choir
- ◆ Real Recognize Real
- ◆ Turiya Autry
- ◆ Cubaneo

To volunteer or for more information please call (503) 988-3663 x 22439

SAVE THE DATE!
You don't want to miss!

OUR ENVIRONMENT HEALTH

A N/NE Portland
Neighborhood Gathering
Saturday, October 1, 2005
11:00am-4:00pm



89.1

kmbd



Community Survey

Dear northeast Portland residents:

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission is considering opening a new liquor store to serve the community in northeast Portland. We are seeking public comment and would ask you to take a minute and let us know what you think.

- No, we do not need another liquor outlet in the community.
- Yes, a new liquor store would be a convenience and a welcome addition to the neighborhood. We would like the new liquor store located near _____

Please send your comments to:

Deputy Director Rudy Williams
Oregon Liquor Control Commission
PO Box 22297
Portland, OR 97269-2297

E-mail: olcc.webmaster@state.or.us