

# In the Field of Environmental Health

## Special Issue: Ready for the Lead Rental Registry

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**Fall 2025**

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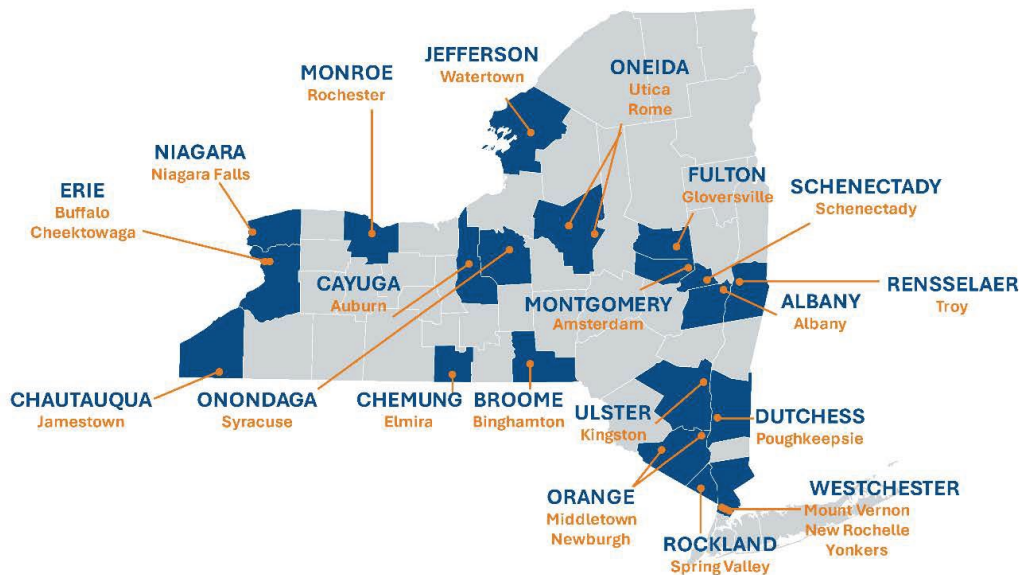
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## Health Departments Prepare for Lead Rental Registry Law



Since the [Public Health Law Section 1377](#) went into effect on November 3, the New York State Lead Rental Registry Program (LRR) is stepping up its program for addressing lead paint hazards in rental homes. The LRR requires property owners and landlords in 25 communities of concern to remove sources of lead in pre-1980 housing. These communities have the highest number of childhood lead poisonings and older rental properties. The LRR requires property owners and landlords to ensure their properties are registered in [Lead Safe NY](#), the New York State Rental Registry data system. They must also have rental units inspected and remediate lead hazards in pre-1980 residential rental housing with two or more units.

### Regulations Pending

The updated regulations for the LRR law will be published in the New York State Register in early December. LHDs are working with municipalities to implement parts of the law as regulations are finalized. The pending regulations should go into effect in 2026. LHD efforts include:

- Attending community events and conducting outreach to share information about the LRR with property owners, tenants, and local governments
- Educating government leaders and the public on the dangers of lead exposure
- Hosting lead-safe repair and lead abatement trainings and certifications to support local workforce needs
- Partnering with local lead coalitions to provide support for successful program implementation
- Working within existing Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention programs to remediate lead hazards
- Promoting childhood blood lead testing at ages 1 and 2 with families and health care providers.

## Lead Safe NY Launched in November

NYS DOH launched the Statewide [Lead Safe NY](#) data system on November 3; Monroe County has its own data system. Over the coming months, LHDs will be reaching out to property owners in the 25 communities of concern to verify and obtain information on rental properties. LHDs are also encouraging property owners to notify tenants about the Lead Rental Registry program using this [fact sheet](#).

CEH staff are developing materials to support LHD implementation. These include document templates legally required for property owners, detailed inspection documents, Lead Safety Certifications, and comprehensive guidance. In partnership with the National Center for Healthy Housing, NYS DOH launched new [webpages](#) for property owners, tenants, and continue offering technical assistance webinars for counties.

Staff continue engaging with the NYS Department of State (DOS) and local code enforcement to align strategies and regulatory expectations. Community of Practice meetings, trainings on enforcement, municipal collaboration, and support for legal and legislative staff are integral for LRR preparation. Planning sessions have begun with partial-service counties to integrate State and municipal resources to best support these communities. Additional coordination with Homes and Community Renewal and historical preservation organizations ensure the needs of older housing stock are addressed. As the State continues to support local implementation, the LRR remains the cornerstone effort to reduce lead-based paint hazards in aging housing stock across the State.

*Contributed by [Tia Marks](#), NYS DOH Bureau of Community Environmental Health and Food Protection.*

## National Center of Healthy Housing Supports New York State Lead Rental Registry Program

*The [National Center of Healthy Housing \(NCHH\)](#) has been a vital partner supporting State and county implementation of the Lead Rental Registry Program. Below are thoughts from Amanda Reddy, NCHH Executive Director (photo top) and Laura Fudala, NCHH Director of Strategic Initiatives (photo bottom) on the national support for regulating the removal of lead paint, the leading source of childhood lead poisoning in rental properties in 25 communities of concern.*

Childhood lead poisoning remains a significant public health problem in the United States, with an estimated half-million children per year exposed to lead. New York State and local health departments have long been leaders at the forefront of the fight to eliminate childhood lead poisoning, implementing innovative solutions across the State to proactively address high-risk homes before children are exposed to lead hazards.



### Key Partners Align Behind the Lead Rental Registry

Building on New York's the almost two-decades old [Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program \(CLPPP+\)](#), New York State's LRR provides another opportunity to improve rental housing quality and reduce lead exposure using a prevention-based, equitable approach. Joining a

handful of other states, New York is part of the movement blazing a trail for widespread primary prevention.

[New York State's LRR](#) provides an opportunity to develop a cooperative and transparent system that will serve as an important foundation for collaboration among LHDs, other governmental agencies, property owners, tenants, and advocates. The goal is to move beyond potential adversarial dynamics (government vs. property owner or renter vs. landlord) and support property owners through education, resources, and financial assistance (e.g., free training on lead-safe work practices and funding for repairs). New York State's LRR has assembled many essential building blocks, leveraging the past and ongoing hard work of LHDs, and the continued support and commitment of a wide array of local-level partners. Ultimate success hinges on effective, sustained implementation and meaningful collaboration among all interest holders.

NCHH looks forward to supporting this significant initiative over the coming years and amplifying the successes and challenges experienced as valuable learning tools for others interested in adopting stronger primary prevention approaches to lead poisoning.

## Get to Know NCHD's Lead Rental Registry Program

Since the early 2000s, Niagara County Health Department (NCHD) has been proactive in lead poisoning prevention. Alongside implementation of their Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP+), NCHD's Public Health Director declared most of the City of Niagara Falls a public health hazard for lead, authorizing it to enforce lead regulations on properties that now coincide with the LRR communities of concern.

### Spreading the Word

Community outreach has been key to program implementation as the County prepares to incorporate the LRR. In March 2025, staff sent letters to property owners explaining the goals of the LRR, and provided NCHD's contact information and assurances for keeping the community informed about the program. This gave property owners the opportunity to ask questions ahead of the rollout of the LRR. In addition to the mailers, NCHD created fliers, brochures, and posters to distribute throughout the community.

Staff from NCHD have hit the pavement to speak with residents and distributed informational fliers at outreach events, such as local farmer's markets and rabies clinics. NCHD is also offering [free training classes](#) for lead safe work practices, and is partnering with local hardware stores and equipment rental stores to share information.

NCHD preemptively identified vacant properties, identifying located boarded up homes and properties with unkept lawns. Their staff use an XRF analyzer to test building exteriors for lead paint. If lead is found, they send letters to property owners that the building could be placarded. This provides an opportunity for the property owner to learn about LRR compliance ahead of the regulatory rollout. Staff also provide information about the [Vacant Rental Program](#), which aims to



help owners of rental properties bring vacant units and small-scale properties back into productive use.

A new office space for the LRR program was created within NCHD along with purchasing equipment, promotional items, obtaining a county vehicle, and contracting a laboratory for dust wipe analysis. The NCHD LRR program has been fully staffed since February 2025 with trained EPA Certified Lead Risk Assessors. The County has created policies and procedures for all aspects of their program. NCHD also has collaborated with Niagara County's Geographic Information System (GIS) team, who are developing a dashboard that will use the coordinates of the properties in the LRR to help track property progress.

## **Partnering in the Community**

NCHD has integrated the LRR program within its existing childhood lead poisoning prevention program. A collaborative relationship with the City of Niagara Falls, Belmont Section 8, and other lead programs to support their efforts is also underway.

NCHD refers residents and property owners to available funding sources, such as [NCHD's HUD "Lead Safe" Grant Program](#) and the [Homes and Community Renewal \(HCR\) funding](#). NCHD holds monthly meetings with County lead programs to discuss progress.

Additional efforts include:

- An agreement with the City of Niagara Falls Redevelopment Office to provide application intake, determine scope of work, and help with the bidding process for their HCR grant funding.
- A relationship with the City of Niagara Falls Code Enforcement and Landlord Registry Office to share information and to help with enforcement.
- A referral program for vacant and rundown property owners to the [Belmont Housing Resources for Western NY Vacant Rental Program](#).
- Partnering with Erie County Health Department to send contractors to its [EPA Renovation, Repair, and Painting \(RRP\)](#) training and certification courses to build contractor capacity in the surrounding community.
- Partnering with Environmental Education Associates through [Niagara County's HUD "Lead Safe" Grant Program](#), for certifications for contractors in RRP, Lead Abatement Worker, and Lead Abatement Supervisor Certifications to perform lead mitigation work.

*Contributed by Anthony J. Zaccarella and Elizabeth Wilson, Niagara County Department of Health.*

## **Chautauqua County Health Lead Rental Registry Early Wins**

Chautauqua County Health Department (CCHD) has begun educating the community and property owners in the City of Jamestown about the LRR. Educational materials included postcards to rental property occupants informing them of the program, and to property owners, encouraging them to get ready for the regulatory rollout. The CCHD continues meeting with the local Real

Estate Investors Association to keep them updated on the new proposed regulations and plans to implement this program.

## **Onboarding Staff and Implementing Inspections**

CCHD hired six new staff and has been restructuring current staff within their lead programs to support the LRR. It is also working across program areas to integrate lead poisoning prevention programs.

CCHD is also using this time to:

- Remediate and closeout outstanding open lead assessments
- Inform and train property owners in renovation, repair and painting (RRP)
- Complete inspections that will qualify for Rental Registry compliance under the pending regulations.

CCHD developed several partnerships with community agencies and coalitions. The Healthy @ Home Coalition, previously a small lead taskforce team, has grown into a full coalition consisting of over 40 people from 25 organizations throughout Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Allegheny counties. CCHD also has a Lead Rental Registry Advisory Group consisting of landlords, property managers, and real estate professionals who have been meeting to share information and provide feedback as the County develops its program.

CCHD plans to implement a fee structure for the Lead Rental Registry. The fee structure for inspections will allow the hiring of program staff and will fund other program costs to sustain the program, as CCD plans to complete inspections and program requirements within their department.

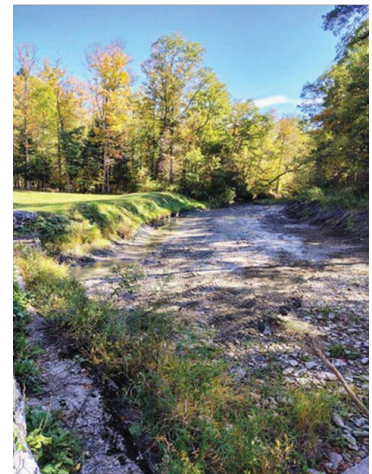
The greatest benefit of the Lead Rental Registry is its anticipated reduction of childhood lead poisoning in the community. Proactive lead regulations will help to prevent lead poisoning and to stop using children as lead detectors and surveillance for lead sources in the home.

*Contributed by Anna Powell and Elizabeth Wilson, Chautauqua County Department of Health*

## **Drinking Water Security Amid Drought Conditions**

Like many counties, Chautauqua has been under a drought warning since October 8, 2025. Weeks of dry weather have led to unusually low reservoir levels for several public water systems. According to the National Weather Service, drought conditions worsened slightly in the early of October before recent precipitation provided some relief.

As a result, drinking water reservoirs experienced significant depletion. Mandatory water conservation orders were issued for customers served by the Town of Ripley and the Village of Fredonia. Ripley declared a state of emergency for its water district on October 14th and took extraordinary actions of using local fire trucks to haul approximately 100,000 gallons of treated water to the reservoir each weekday from



northeast Pennsylvania. These efforts, combined with recent rainfall, have helped stabilize reservoir levels. Ripley has since lifted its mandatory water conservation order while continuing to monitor supply conditions. The Village of Fredonia, which saw its reservoir drop about five inches in October, also lifted conservation orders following recent rainfall and reduced demand. In the Town of Westfield, only of three streams that supply the Town's reservoir remained active. As a result, residents were encouraged to voluntarily conserve water. While hydrological conditions have improved over the past month, a Drought Watch remains in effect out of an abundance of caution as the County continues to track precipitation.

## **Options for Addressing Low Reservoir Levels**

Municipalities have been exploring the following options to address low drinking water reservoir levels such as:

- Using established interconnections with other nearby water systems, when available. This requires that connected system have the capacity to support additional water consumption needs, as well as the installation of pumps to account for elevation differences.
- Pumping or transporting raw water from alternative sources into the reservoir or other raw water storage. The transported water must not have contaminants or conditions that the treatment plant can't address. This option tends to be more expensive and requires equipment.
- Transporting finished water from another regulated system to finished water storage. This would require a nearby regulated source of water as well as a regulated bulk water permit. This is the most expensive option and would require specialized equipment and frequent sanitization. New York State Office of Emergency Management also has one 6,700-gallon tanker in the State stockpiles and a contract to sanitize bulk water trailers.

Recent rain has provided some short-term relief. Both Ripley and Fredonia have lifted their mandatory conservation orders. Reservoir levels in these communities have stabilized for now, though local officials continue to monitor conditions closely given ongoing precipitation deficits across the region.

## **Future Assessment**

Hauling water provides temporary relief, but is not a sustainable long-term solution, making water conservation efforts extremely important. Ongoing drought conditions compromise fire fighting capacity, and impact sanitation and hygiene in schools, childcare centers, and food service establishments that rely on the municipal water.

Regional environmental health staff are working closely with the Chautauqua County Health Department, which oversees these water systems. The County continues to monitor and report reservoir levels to the Center for Environmental Health's Bureau of Water Supply Protection, in accordance with reporting requirements outlined by New York State's Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services.

Learn more at current [New York State drought conditions](#).

*Contributed by Patrick Toye, NYS DOH Western Regional Office, and Jessica Wuerstle and Natalie Whitman, Chautauqua County Department of Health.*

## NYS Reaches a Milestone as the Lead Rental Registry Moves Forward in 25 Communities of Concern

The LRR represents the largest undertaking for addressing childhood lead poisoning since CLPPP+. It moves the needle from lead poisoning intervention to proactively removing lead hazards from rental homes before a child is lead poisoned.

The LRR law went into effect on November 3 in 25 communities of concern with the highest levels of childhood poisoning and older rental housing. As the regulations wind their way through the final stages, health departments have been engaging landlords, tenants, and municipalities to help them prepare to comply with LRR regulations as they go into effect.

A huge thank you to Governor Hochul for providing the leadership and funding to make this possible. And, a huge thank you to the hundreds of State and local health staff who are instrumental in paving the way for the LRR. Your efforts, input, and support are building a nation-leading program that addresses the largest remaining cause of childhood lead poisoning in New York State. Now the ground game ramps up as regulations become finalized and the Lead Safe NY registry become populated in anticipation of upcoming inspections.

The State has been funding counties to build their infrastructure to oversee the LRR. Counties have been staffing offices and promoting training for landlords and contractors on lead safe remediation and certification requirements. They are also using this time to educate landlords and tenants in the 25 communities of concern about what the LRR requires and why.

Our Lead Program is here to help this roll out be as smooth and efficient as possible. Please reach out to [rental.registry@health.ny.gov](mailto:rental.registry@health.ny.gov) with any questions or concerns. Together we are taking a major step forward to protect children and families across the State from lead poisoning.



Gary Ginsberg, Director  
Center for Environmental Health

### More Resources

#### [Lead Rental Registry](#)

Check out our expanded website for property owners and tenants.

#### [Lead Poisoning Prevention](#)

Find information about childhood lead poisoning, risks to adults, and their associated resources here.

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**Special thanks to our contributors!**

## Order Childhood Lead Prevention Promo Items

Order childhood lead poisoning prevention tote bags (pub number 6770) to remind families to blood test for lead at ages one and two, to serve foods that help absorb lead, and for tips to reduce lead poisoning at home. Health offices can [order](#) up to 175 bags.