Kansas—Impact Statement

Each year, approximately 138 children and 319 adults are newly diagnosed with lead poisoning. The Kansas Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Protection Program (KHHLHPP) and county health department officials follow up on these cases, inspect the homes, and order repairs to units with lead hazards. Scientific research indicates the need to start helping even more children with blood lead levels below the current action level.

KHHLHPP also maintains a surveillance system, STELLAR, to capture and aggregate the results of blood tests for lead. STELLAR accumulated over 38,000 blood test records in 2010. The surveillance data enables the KHLHPP to identify high-risk areas for lead poisoning and track patterns over time. The data is also shared with other health and environmental agencies and is matched with several other area programs.

KHHLHPP is also responsible for enforcing EPA's Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule, the most important legislation enacted by EPA in the last twenty years. KHHLHPP trains renovators in lead-safe work practices and has engaged in several outreach activities to educate the general public about the dangers of lead-based paint and the importance of working lead-safe.

CDC funding enables this program to respond to emerging lead threats. For example, in some cases, multiple children in the same family may have elevated blood lead levels. The CDC-funded environmental health professional conducts an environmental inspection to identify a lead hazard in the home or child care facility.

KHHLHPP received $254,737 in FY10, which paid for five full-time staff positions for grantees. KHHLHPP was also able to support five small subcontracts using these funds. The FY11 funding level is $594,000, allowing for a great expansion in scope; but the entire program could be in jeopardy if the Senate version of the appropriations bill is adopted as law. Elimination of or severe cutbacks to the program in FY12 will result in job loss and a reduction in vital services. Without the surveillance data, there will be no way to treat the existing threat or track a possible resurgence in blood lead levels.