

Lead Poisoning in Barry County

What are we doing to track this problem?



Why Is This Important?

Protecting children from exposure to lead is important, as even low levels of lead in blood have been shown to affect IQ, ability to pay attention, and success in school. Effects of lead exposure cannot be corrected once the exposure has happened.

It is important to gather data about children with lead poisoning in Barry County, so that exposures to potential sources of lead can be decreased and education can be provided to at-risk families.

Did You Know?

Most childhood cases of lead poisoning in Barry County happen because of exposure to lead paint and lead dust in older homes.



Case Management

The Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD) staff follow up with the parents or guardians of each child with a positive Blood Lead Level greater than or equal to 5 micrograms per deciliter in order to:

- Assist with an environmental evaluation for potential sources of lead, which could occur from lead paint, lead dust, some products such as toys and toy jewelry, certain jobs and hobbies, some imported foods such as candies or spices, traditional home remedies, and certain water pipes
- Arrange for additional blood lead testing, if needed
- Provide additional assessment, education, and resources

Extensive management of lead poisoning cases allows the health department to identify:

- Associated cases that may be in the same household or family
- New or previously unrecognized sources of lead that are contributing to lead poisoning



Data Monitoring and Surveillance

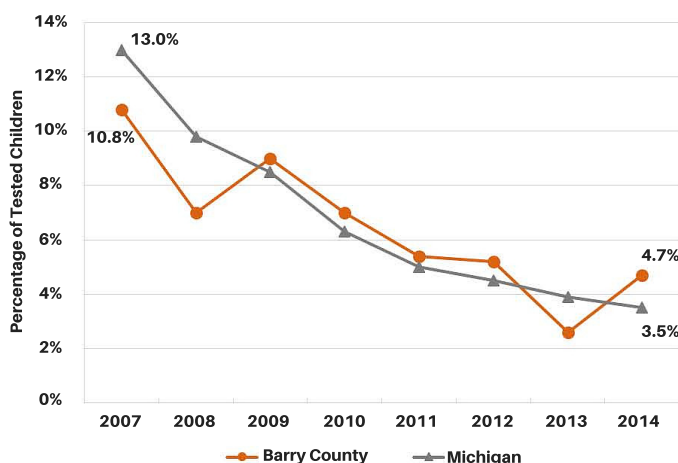
BEDHD monitors, or tracks, many indicators regarding childhood lead poisoning in Barry County, including:

- Number of children tested, including those on Medicaid
- Number of children with Blood Lead Levels (BLL) greater than or equal to 5 micrograms per deciliter (the level at which CDC recommends public health actions be initiated)
- Zip code level data

As shown on the graph below, the percentage of Barry County children tested for lead with an elevated BLL decreased between 2007 and 2014, similar to statewide data.

Data will be monitored to see if the recent increase in cases continues. 11 more cases occurred in 2014 than in 2013.

Percentage of Tested Children Less than Age Six with Blood Lead Levels $\geq 5\mu\text{g/dL}$



Source: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services



The number of Barry County children under six years of age who have an elevated BLL has decreased by 68% from 2007 to 2014!

More education and environmental repairs are necessary, as lead poisoning is preventable. The goal of BEDHD is to have every child be free from lead exposures.

For more information on lead poisoning or potential lead exposures, please contact the Barry-Eaton District Health Department at (269) 945-9516.



Barry-Eaton District Health Department
July 2016

To learn more about lead, visit www.michigan.gov/lead.