



HEALTHY HOMES DEPARTMENT

Including the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Chris Bazar
Agency Director

Maricela N. Foster
Director

2000 Embarcadero
Suite 300
Oakland, CA
94606-5300

Phone
510.567.8282

Fax
510.567.8272

www.achhd.org

March 24, 2015

NEWS FOR RELEASE: Immediately

Alameda County Media CONTACT: Julie Twichell – Healthy Homes Department
510.684.5890 julie.twichell@acgov.org

Alameda County Agency Wins Award to Repair Homes Amidst Housing Crisis

OAKLAND, Calif. – [Alameda County Community Development Agency's Healthy Homes Department](#) (ACHHD) has been awarded \$3.4 million by the U.S Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to help make homes healthier in areas hardest hit by the housing crisis.

With the shortage of housing and skyrocketing rents, Alameda County's most vulnerable populations, including seniors and families with young children, are finding it increasingly difficult to find safe and affordable housing.

"Substandard housing has become the affordable housing option for low-income families and seniors. This puts our vulnerable residents at increased risk of housing-related health problems including respiratory illness, lead poisoning, and serious injuries", states Maricela Foster, Director of the Healthy Homes Department.

Successfully demonstrating the need in a federal grant application to HUD, Alameda County was awarded funds to reduce lead hazards and increase the supply of healthy affordable housing over the next 3 years. The focus will be on low-income families with children under six years old and pregnant women living in housing built before 1978, the year that lead in paint was banned. Funds and project management assistance are available for both owner occupied and rental housing in Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville, and Oakland and the Unincorporated areas of Ashland, Cherryland and San Lorenzo.

The senior population in Alameda County will also receive help in keeping their housing safe and affordable through local and federal funds. The numbers of seniors in Alameda County will more than double by 2020, becoming what is now referred to as the silver tsunami. Over 1 in 4 seniors is low-income and more than one in three are burdened by housing costs that exceed 30% of their income. In addition, many local seniors who purchased their home 20 or more years ago are now on fixed incomes, often making home maintenance impossible.

In response, the Alameda County Healthy Homes Department is offering assistance to low-income homeowners, including seniors and people with disabilities, to make repairs on their home. Assistance includes emergency repairs such as plumbing, electrical and water heaters, accessibility improvements and major housing rehabilitation including roof, foundation, dry rot, furnace, window



Alameda County

Lead Poisoning
Prevention Program

Housing Rehabilitation
Program

Healthy Homes
Program

and stair work. Grants, project coordination, and deferred loans are currently available in Albany, Dublin, Fremont and Union City.

“We all agree that there is a housing crisis. But there is more to it than a lack of affordable homes. There is the safety and health of our housing. The Healthy Homes Department is the leader in creating innovative solutions to resolve unhealthy housing conditions”, states Wilma Chan, Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

Residents and property owners can find out more about these programs by calling the Alameda County Healthy Homes Department at 510-567-8280 or visiting www.achhd.org

Examples of unsafe housing conditions and work done through ACHHD housing repair programs:



Mold can cause respiratory problems especially for People with asthma



ACHHD staff provides a consultation on keeping a home healthy, safe and dry.



Before



After



Before



After