Hello Hoosier Environmental!

Happy Earth Month! In this spring edition of the Improving Kids' Environment newsletter you will find information on:
- climate change and asthma
- mulching to protect kids from lead-contaminated soil
- upcoming events

Thank you for all you do to help Hoosier children!

Happy Earth Month

April is Earth Month and our staff want to thank you for your sincere care and advocacy for a healthy environment in Indiana. If you value the work we do, please consider making a gift to support that work this month. Gifts can be made safely and securely at hecweb.org/donate and your Earth Month gift will be matched dollar-for-dollar by longtime donors Alice and Bob Schloss! Thank you for your supporting our work

Climate Change and Asthma
The impacts of climate change are broad and include impacts for those dealing with asthma. The Indiana Climate Change Impacts Assessment describes how the climate of Indiana is changing, and it includes a report on the **human health impacts** of climate change. This report explores potential issues that can surface from air quality changes in Indiana. Higher temperatures and stagnant air are predicted to worsen air quality. Poor air quality can cause asthma attacks, heart attacks and cause or worsen respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses. The allergy season is also projected to increase by a month by 2050. Ragweed and other plants produce more pollen due to the increase in carbon dioxide which promotes their growth.

The **American Lung Association** states that as temperature increases, air pollution from ozone and particle pollution will worsen. The increase in rainfall, which Indiana is experiencing, can cause an increase in mold which is a trigger for asthma and other respiratory diseases.

You can take action to reduce these effects. Find and **fix leaks and mold**. Look out for poor air quality days on your local weather forecast or at [AirNow.gov](http://AirNow.gov) by entering your zip code at the very top of the page. When air quality is poor, people with asthma should limit their time outdoors, especially from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m, and avoid exercising outdoors.

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**"Mulch Madness" and Other Ways to Live Lead Safe**

Tackling childhood lead poisoning in Indiana takes a multi-pronged approach, including blood tests, changes to policy, and improving the built environment. The only way to know if a child has been exposed to lead is to get them tested. However, many families want to know other ways to protect themselves from lead exposure and prevent lead poisoning.

The key for many older homes is lead remediation and abatement. Remediation and abatement are strategies that homeowners, property managers, and even tenants, can take to live lead safe. Some strategies are simple, like regularly taking off shoes to avoid tracking in contaminated soil. Others can be more complicated, such as window repair and replacement.

In South Bend, Indiana, students from the University of Notre Dame, along with local neighborhood associations, have developed a unique way to help limit lead exposure in high-risk communities. The annual event, dubbed “Mulch Madness”, brings mulch to homes where lead is likely to be present in the soil around the home. Mulch provides a barrier between lead-containing soil and kids and is an **effective interim strategy to address high soil lead levels**.

On April 1st, 200 students, as well as participating community members, distributed mulch to 30 homes in South Bend. In addition, team captains connected residents to local resources, including the city’s **Lead Remediation Grant**. The Lead Remediation Grant is one of many grants in the state of Indiana that provide funds to reduce lead in homes through remediation and abatement.

If you’d like to learn more about lead testing or prevention visit [Indiana Lead Free](http://IndianaLeadFree).

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**Events and Engagement**

- **InJAC Summit 2023: Addressing Asthma in a Social and Environmental Context**. Celebrate World Asthma Day by joining this **free 3-hour virtual event on May 4** with learning opportunities regarding the holistic approach to asthma management, including how social determinants of health impact asthma treatment.
• **Free one-day Lead-Safe Training** for anyone who provides renovation or maintenance for homes, schools, or day-cares built before 1978. This class is for painters, renovation and repair contractors, building code officials, regulators, residents, parents, landlords, staff working with contractors and many more. **In person Friday May 5th, Glendale Library in Indianapolis**

• **2023 Midwest Lead and Healthy Housing Conference** will feature topics ranging from lead, asthma, and radon, to screening methodologies. **In person, May 10th and 11th. Registration is open.**

• **Indiana School Health Network Conference** The theme of this year's conference is “School Health: Connecting the Pieces”. **In person, June 14th and 15th.** The deadline to register is June 7th.

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**HEC’s Event Calendar**

The Hoosier Environmental Council also offers a newsletter that discusses a broad range of environmental issues specific to Indiana. To sign-up, click [here](#).

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*Hoosier Environmental Council relies on partners like you to do this important work.*

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**Please Donate**

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