



## How is the Berrien County Health Department Preventing Lead Poisoning?

The Berrien County Health Department, continues to screen children for elevated blood lead levels, through blood testing, and provides education to parents, health care providers, and others about the risk factors for lead poisoning. Because the majority of lead poisoning is a result of ingested or inhaled lead-based paint, the Berrien County Health Department has focused its efforts on helping families make their home lead safe; there have been several programs that have successfully remediated lead-based paint hazards in homes across Berrien County.

*The most significant source of lead is lead-based paint present in homes and buildings built before 1978.*

*For over forty years, the Berrien County Health Department has worked to reduce and eliminate childhood lead poisoning hazards. These efforts have led to considerable gains, including increased awareness of lead as an environmental hazard in older homes, significant reductions in the percentage of children with elevated blood lead levels, and improvements in guidance for the testing and the treatment of lead poisoned children.*



## Lead and Water Quality

Municipal water systems in Michigan are regulated under the authority of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Municipal water systems routinely collect water samples from homes to monitor quality, including to check for levels of lead in the drinking water, in accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. If more than 10 percent of tap water samples exceed the lead action level of 15 parts per billion, then water systems are required to take additional actions. Residents interested in having their water tested should contact their municipal water system authority.

## Childhood Lead Levels in Berrien County (2011-2017)

Percentage of At-Risk Children under Age 6 with Elevated Lead Levels (above 5 µg/dL)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Berrien County	5.2%	5.3%	3.8%	3.0%	3.8%	3.5%	2.88%
49022	8.0%	8.3%	5.2%	4.0%	3.4%	4.4%	3.08%

*Note: Data from 2018 is still being collected and analyzed; however, there does not appear to be any associated trends that would indicate an increase in blood lead levels of children in our community.*