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## Fayette redevelopment authority targets lead in homes

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More than 50 Fayette County homes have been eradicated of lead paint hazards in the last four years, and the redevelopment authority wants to complete 23 more before the program ends in 2015.

"Because of our demographic, because of our housing stock and the age of our housing stock," Fayette County was identified as a good candidate for a program that removes lead paint hazards from homes, said Andrew P. French, executive director of the redevelopment authority.

The authority is seeking applicants for its Lead Hazard Control Program that is open to renters or property owners with children 6 and younger. Households selected will be provided up to \$8,000 in grant funds. Assistance is based on income.

Homes with lead hazards typically were built before 1978.

Once assistance is approved, an inspection and risk assessment of a home is conducted and children may be tested for elevated levels of lead in their blood, according to a press release. After renovations are completed, the home will be re-evaluated to ensure that hazards have been cleared.

French said workers usually are able to seal off parts of a home so the hazards aren't dispersed. If extensive work is needed, the grant can cover the costs of temporary relocation. In past projects, residents have been able to stay with friends or family, he said.

"In the event they do, we'll work with the family," he said. "We try to get in there, get the work done as quickly as possible."

Uniontown and Connellsville residents cannot apply because both cities offer their own programs. Fayette County resident Daniel Kurtz said in the news release that he was confident the program would improve his home after looking at before and after photos of homes on the authority's web site.

"With a young child living in my home, I certainly feel better about her well-being," Kurtz said. Inspectors typically see lead paint on door and window frames and basement floors.

"We don't see it as much outside," French said.

The redevelopment authority sometimes couples the lead hazard program with its Homeowner Rehabilitation Program, French said. If an inspector determines code violations exist, the rehab program could offer additional funds for repairs, French said.

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