



RHODE ISLAND

2024 Healthy Housing Fact Sheet

Hazardous conditions found in unsafe housing can lead to lead poisoning, asthma and other respiratory illnesses, cancer, and unintentional injuries or death, resulting in poor school attendance and performance for children, missed workdays for parents, and the loss of loved ones for all. These hazards and their health impacts disproportionately affect communities of color and low-income communities, making the need for healthy housing a significant environmental and racial justice issue. Recent events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, along with the associated increase in both incidence and severity of extreme weather events, have urgently underscored and amplified our need for safer, healthier, affordable, and more resilient housing and drawn much-needed attention to the expanding scope of related programs and policies. Increased time spent at home and ongoing challenges to healthy housing service delivery due to these events and others have affected health negatively and displayed—in sharp contrast—the longstanding crisis of inequitable access to quality housing and healthcare.



In Rhode Island, **33% of children live in households with a high housing cost burden**, and 15% of children live in poverty (2021).



70% of Rhode Island housing was built prior to 1978 and may contain lead-based paint; approximately 28% was built in 1939 or earlier.



In 2018, **731 Rhode Island children tested had an elevated blood lead level** (5 µg/dL or more); **174 of them had blood lead levels of 10 µg/dL or more.**



Approximately **13% of adults** and **almost 7% of children have current asthma** in Rhode Island (2021).



Asthma emergency department visit rates per 1,000 Rhode Island children ages 0-4 from 2013 to 2017 were **20.5 for Black children and 16.5 for Hispanic children compared to 5.9 for white children.**



One in four Rhode Island homes has elevated levels of radon in their indoor air. In **Exeter and Richmond, over half** of homes are above the action level (2021).



Carbon monoxide exposure was responsible for **53 emergency department visits** in Rhode Island in 2022. On average, **three Rhode Island residents die annually** from carbon monoxide exposure (2017-2021).



215 Rhode Islanders over the age of 65 **died of unintentional falls** in 2020.

CRITICAL FEDERAL FUNDING FOR HEALTHY HOUSING

A broad array of programs across the federal government support healthy housing activities and related efforts including increasing affordable housing, improving health outcomes, providing supportive services to families, improving energy efficiency, and identifying and addressing environmental hazards. Critical programs and services supporting crucial health and housing services in states and localities are outlined below; increasing appropriations allows new states to access funding and currently funded states to expand their programs.

Has RI received funding since 2021?

CDC's:

- ✓ **Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program**
- ✓ **National Asthma Control Program**
- ✓ **Environmental Health Tracking Network**

HUD's:

- x **Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes**

EPA's:

- ✓ **Lead Categorical Grants**
- ✓ **State Indoor Radon Grants**
- ✓ **Environmental Justice Grants**

DOE's:

- ✓ **Weatherization Assistance Program**

For more information on these programs and their impacts, as well as many others available to support healthy housing efforts, refer to [NCHH's Agency Fact Sheets](#).

May 2024. For **references**, additional **state-specific** healthy homes information, and to learn how you can **engage your members of Congress** on these vital issues...

visit: <http://bit.ly/StatePro>

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