



# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## 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 the District of Columbia, **31% of children live in households with a high housing cost burden**, and 24% of children live in poverty (2021).



**72% of District housing was built prior to 1978** (32% before 1940) and may contain lead-based paint. Due to the age of the housing stock, the **District of Columbia requires a 100% screening rate for children at ages 1 and 2.**



In the District in 2018, **157 tested children under age 6 tested had an elevated blood lead level** (5 µg/dL or more).



There are **more than 28,000 lead or galvanized iron service lines** in Washington, DC.



Almost **12% of adults and 10% of children have current asthma** in the District of Columbia (2021).



In DC, the **emergency department visit rates for asthma are 23 times higher in wards 7 and 8 than in Ward 3 and 20 times higher for Black residents than for White residents** (2010-2014).



**Unintentional falls were responsible for 48 deaths** among Washingtonians over the age of 65 in 2020.



Almost **20% of District of Columbia households have severe housing problems**, including overcrowding or lack of kitchen or plumbing facilities.

### 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 DC received funding since 2021?

##### CDC's:

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

##### HUD's:

- ✓ **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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