



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NAACP DEMANDS A FUTURE FREE OF LEAD EXPOSURE AND ASTHMA IN DC

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The NAACP DC Branch urges Mayor Bowser and the Council of the District of Columbia to implement solutions focused on reducing lead exposure and asthma, affecting children in the District of Columbia. In partnership with over 20 partner organizations, we will host a Virtual Press Conference on Tuesday, March 29, 2022 at 10:00am EST on ZOOM. Register Here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAqce2urT0sGdZlf8VmfXEkW2fhjxluomqS>

Environmental and climate justice is a civil rights issue. The NAACP advocates for environmental justice, while advancing diversity, equity and inclusion across the District of Columbia. Environmental injustices, lead exposure and air pollution have disproportionately severe, health-impacts on lower-income, Black residents, so we fight for the policies and budget allocations to fosters sustainable communities.

Lead exposure and air pollution are two of the most critical issues impacting the lives of Black residents in DC. DC Water's Capital Improvement Plan's (CIP) plans to replace 20% of known lead service lines by 2030 and the remaining 80% of lead service lines will be removed by customer-initiated programs, which puts an administrative burden on our most marginalized residents. We are requesting replacement of all Lead Service Lines, while prioritizing communities of the lowest incomes. We are requesting free water filters be provided to DC residents, specifically low to median income customers, supporting access to lead free water until pipe replacement is complete.

Children are exposed to asthma triggers of air pollution, mold, rodent and roach infestations in their homes and poorly maintained rental housing. Housing code violations combine with toxins in the air to create unhealthy living conditions for families with young children and are some of the leading causes of asthma related emergency room visits, hospitalizations and school absenteeism. Children living in Wards 7 and 8 are 20 times more likely to seek emergency care for asthma than children residing in Ward 3. NAACP urges more effective, housing code inspections and enforcement to reduce asthma and lead exposure by prioritizing housing where sick children live and enforcing the correction of hazardous conditions.

Akosua Ali, stated, "DC residents are not equally impacted by environmental injustices. Race, class, income, affordable housing, healthcare access and privilege influence the health impacts of environmental toxins. Lead exposure and asthma have dangerous impacts on our lower-income communities and we urge immediate action to save our children."

For more information, please email naacp@naacpdc.org

ABOUT NAACP:

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are premier advocates for civil rights in their communities. The mission of NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social and economic quality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.