



DATE: January 8, 2014

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Environmental Health Committee
Keith Grellner, Chair

SUBJECT: BRIEFING ON WAC 246-101-010, NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS -- DEFINITIONS
ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVEL

Background and Summary:

The Washington State Board of Health has responsibility under RCW 43.20.050 to adopt rules to prevent communicable and also noninfectious diseases. The Board's actions to do this include the notifiable conditions rules' definition of elevated blood lead level under WAC 246-101-101(12). The current definition is set at equal to or greater than 10 micrograms per deciliter of blood for children under fifteen years old and equal to or greater than 25 micrograms per deciliter for older individuals. The younger a person is the more susceptible he or she is to the effects of lead.

Although no level of lead is considered safe, recently revised Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines set levels of concern at equal to or greater than 5 micrograms per deciliter of blood for children under fifteen and 10 micrograms per deciliter for older individuals. The Department proposes the Board amend its rule definition to match the current national recommendations.

Another section in this chapter of rules requires laboratories to report to the Department within two business days when a blood sample is detected to have an elevated lead level. Non-elevated blood lead level test results must be reported to the Department only monthly. Faster reporting could allow local health to implement control measures quicker. Although the rules do not require local health to implement control measures, many do by contacting affected individuals, providing education about lead sources, or other consultative interventions. The Department's contacts with the Department of Labor and Industries could also result in faster workplace investigations and advice to have children in the worker's home screened. The Department is also recommending some "housekeeping" amendments to this rule at this time.

Rad Cunningham, of the Department of Health's Environmental Epidemiology Program, is here today to explain the Department's proposal to revise WAC 246-101-010. A copy of his presentation can be found under Tab 7.

Recommended Board Action: None

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