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Definitions of Elevated Blood Lead Level in the Notifiable Conditions Rule

Washington State Board of Health
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Purpose for Updating Notifiable Conditions Rule

- Adopt national standards for elevated blood lead levels
- Rule “housekeeping”

Changes at the National Level

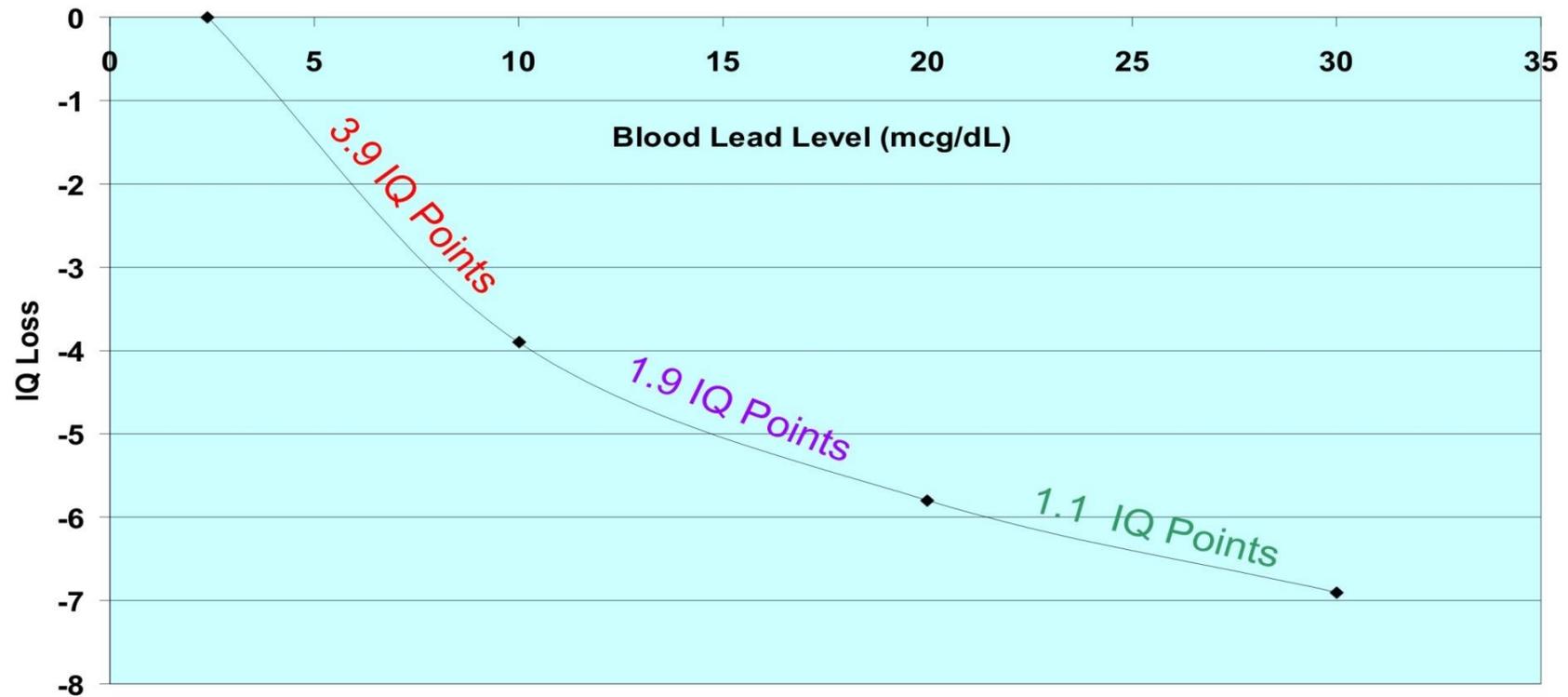
- **Adult Definition**: In 2009 the Council for State and Territorial Epidemiologists recommended the change to 10 mcg/dL and CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health adopted the recommendation.
- **Child Definition**: In 2012 the Advisory Committee on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention recommended the change to 5 mcg/dL and the CDC Childhood Lead Program adopted the recommendation.

New Research on Health Effects

- The CDC and EPA agree that there is no safe level of lead
- Health effects in children between 5 and 9.9 mcg/dL
 - Decreased academic achievement
 - Deficits in intellectual abilities (IQ Scores)
 - Attention-related behavior problems
 - Delayed puberty
- Health effects in adults between 10 and 24.9 mcg/dL
 - Increased risk of miscarriage
 - Increased risk for cardiovascular disease

Blood Lead Levels Harm Children's Brains

Lanphear, 2005



Current Rule

- Definition of elevated blood lead level
 - Equal to or greater than 10 mcg/dL for children less than 15 years
 - Equal to or greater than 25 mcg/dL for adults 15 years or older
- Reporting requirements
 - Elevated cases (children and adults): 2 business days
 - Non-elevated cases: 30 days

Draft Rule

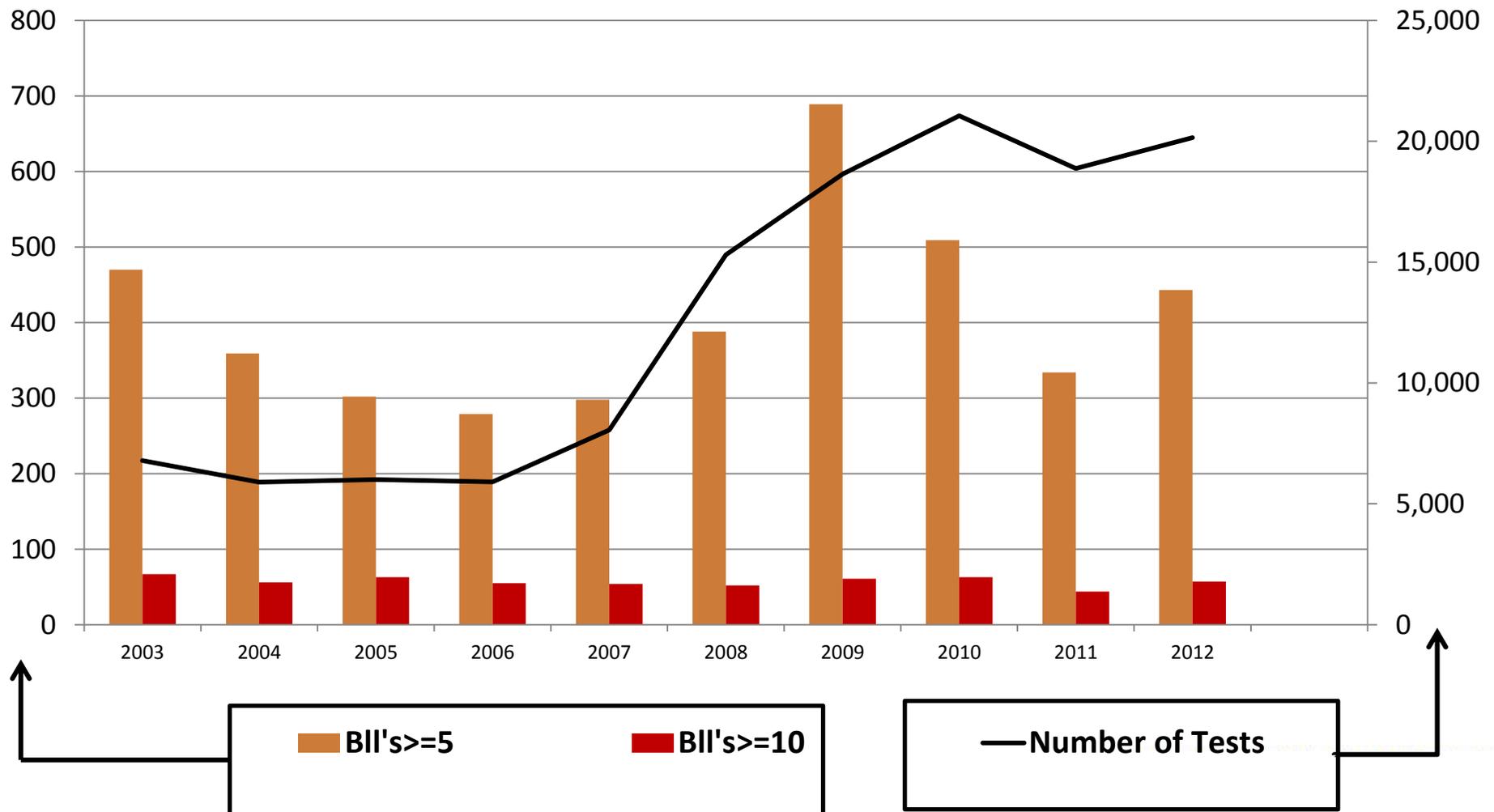
- Definition of elevated blood lead level consistent with national standards:
 - Equal to or greater than 5 mcg/dL for children less than 15 years
 - Equal to or greater than 10 mcg/dL for adults 15 years or older
- Reporting requirements remain the same
- Definition of laboratory: reference chapter 246-338 WAC, Medical Test Site Rules
- Definition of health care facility: consistent with SHB 2056, Chapter 10 Laws of 2012

Impacts of the Draft Rule: Laboratories

- Laboratories* will be required to report to the Department of Health more tests in the 2 business day timeframe as opposed to the 30 day timeframe
 - This includes all childhood results between 5 and 9.9 mcg/dL and all adult results between 10 and 24.9 mcg/dL

*Laboratories include CLIA certified laboratories and any providers office, head start program, or other entity using a point of care lead screening device.

Childhood Blood Lead Levels (BLL) >5 in WA over the Last Decade



Impacts of the Draft Rule: Labor and Industries

- The Department of Labor and Industries will have faster access to adult blood lead results between 10 and 24.9 mcg/dL
 - This will better inform their workplace investigations

Impacts of the Draft Rule: Local Health Jurisdictions

- Department of Health will notify local health jurisdictions (LHJs) more quickly with results between 5 and 9.9 mcg/dL
- LHJs that investigate 5 to 9.9 mcg/dL results will be able to initiate investigations more quickly
 - Clark, Grant, Island, King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties already investigate this level
- The draft rule will not require any LHJ to investigate any case of elevated blood lead

Impacts of the Draft Rule: People

- Parents and caregivers of children with blood lead levels between 5 and 9.9 mcg/dL will get assistance faster
- More children will have lead exposure sources identified and removed more quickly improving their health, intelligence, and educational outcomes
- Adults with blood lead levels between 10 and 24.9 mcg/dL will get letters more quickly encouraging them to have their children screened for elevated blood lead levels

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Questions?

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