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## **NEWS**RELEASE

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### County to Conduct *Paint Stabilization* Pilot Study *"Method of Cost-Effective Interim Lead Hazard Control Sought"*

The Oneida County Health Department's Lead Primary Prevention Program (LPP), through its New York State Department of Health grant, will conduct a pilot project designed to study the impact of using new paints containing primer as a method of stabilizing deteriorating lead paint surfaces in Utica's pre-1978 houses, County Executive Anthony J. Picente, Jr. announced today.

As part of the 1-year study, 168 rental housing units in West Utica and Cornhill will be selected after the analysis of visual inspections and dust wipe samplings determines their eligibility based on 'conditions conducive to lead poisoning.' Units with young children living in them will be a priority. Once a housing unit is enrolled in the study, its owner or maintenance staff will be provided a free EPA Renovator Training class valued at \$195 and a voucher to obtain the study paint and supplies through a local vendor. The vouchers will cover the cost of the high quality paint with primer, brushes and rollers up to \$140. Participating property owners will agree to use the supplies on specific high risk surfaces such as windows, window trims, doors and porches and consent to a re-inspection and analysis of the unit in one year for comparison purposes. The study hopes to demonstrate a cost effective method of stabilizing lead-based paint surfaces and whether the new paint with primer products are effective in reducing chipping and peeling of 'high use' surfaces over time.

*"This innovative pilot study was designed by our LPP and will be conducted exclusively in Oneida County. Its findings, however, will have far-reaching effects in that the knowledge gained will be shared with Lead Primary Prevention programs throughout New York State and could well shape future policy on interim lead hazard control,"* Picente said.

The County Executive stressed that the elimination of childhood lead poisoning in Oneida County will require solutions that are both creative and cost effective and added, *"While replacing older windows can reduce lead dust in the home by 60-70%, the cost can be prohibitive for many property owners. It is incumbent upon us to investigate and develop various means of protecting the community's children from lead hazards while being mindful of the cost to the home owners."*

Homeowner repairs made to chipped and peeling painted surfaces often employ low-quality paint products and seldom include the use of primer. The new paint with primer products have demonstrated superior adherence and coverage in laboratory testing. *The Lead Primary Prevention Paint Stabilization Pilot Study* will evaluate these products in actual rental settings prone to high wear and tear and extreme weather conditions.

Dr. Gayle Jones, Director of Health, says one of the goals of the Lead Primary Prevention Program is to find sustainable methods of dealing with lead-based paint hazards.

*"In designing this pilot study, the Health Department is seeking long-term solutions that will reduce lead dust levels in the home. Conducting studies that support our Public Health work allows us to develop a body of evidence-based practices that can guide us and others in making effective decisions that will serve to improve overall health outcomes,"* Jones said.

Jones said City of Utica rental property owners interested in participating in the pilot study should call the Lead Primary Prevention Program at 266-6147.

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