Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have an interest in the Healthy Homes Partnership. Please add Lahouse@agcenter.lsu.edu to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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July 2015

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Director's Update

It's hard to have any discussion on healthy homes this month without addressing the effects of the extreme weather across the US on residences. A look at the news shows much of the Western US suffering from drought while many areas of the Midwest and Southern Plains are under flood warnings. Both extremes have consequences for homes and families.

Droughts shrink the soil, and can lead to uneven settlement of foundations. Without sufficient support, cracks often form in the foundation, as well as around door frames and windows. These cracks allow water leaks and pest intrusion. Cracks in foundation walls and slabs can also allow radon to enter the home interior. Settlement and cracks can become more severe if the drought is followed by rapid rainfall. This could eventually require costly structural repairs.

In flood areas, mold is an immediate concern after the waters have receded. Families are often better off to discard wet or moldy drywall, ceiling tile, carpet, and upholstery. Walls and structural components need to be checked for moisture content before restoration. Non-porous surfaces can be cleaned (best to clean with detergent, and avoid bleach). Without proper remedial measures, mold can thrive later inside of wall cavities, crawl spaces and attics. Mold removal guidelines for families, including protective clothing, are on the www.healthyhomespartnership.net website.

The best way to reduce the effects of extreme weather on homes is to implement the concept of resilient design and construction. Resilient homes are built, renovated, or repaired to be more resistant to damage from future natural disasters while also increasing energy efficiency and implementing the eight principles of Healthy Homes (dry, clean, pest-free, ventilated, safe, maintained, contaminant-free, and comfortable). A good resource for this idea can be found in the newly published Rebuild Healthy Homes guide.

Michael Goldschmidt, National Director - Healthy Homes Partnership

HUD HH Happenings
4 States Selected as National Models for Healthy Homes Programs
On July 13, model programs in Alaska, Maine, Missouri and Wisconsin were presented the inaugural HUD Secretary's Award for Healthy Homes. This award recognizes excellence in promoting resident health through housing interventions. Read more about each state's achievement.

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HHP State Story: Louisiana

Partnerships:

New HH funding from the La. Dept. of Health will leverage and expand the La. HHP program. Now that CDC's HH funding support to states has been restored, Extension was invited and has just received a 2-year contract for a Healthy and Lead-Safe La. Homes educational outreach program. The HHP project scope laid the groundwork for it.

Welcome back Bobbie! That state contract enabled La. to hire Dr. Bobbie Shaffett, retired Miss. Extension specialist, as a 60% Healthy Homes Educator. What a boost to have this seasoned healthy home educator join the La. team!

The La. Healthy Homes Coalition met at the state health dept. office in new Orleans to optimize participation. The agenda opened with brief intros of the national HHP, and both state HH projects - yet the meat of the meeting was a free-flowing discussion of "Ideas, Suggestions, Comments and Questions about program plans. Collaboration Opportunities was the last agenda item, but not a discussion. All were asked to write ideas on the back of their name table tent. This produced a wealth of opportunities later summarized to share with all and spearhead new outreach initiatives.

Partnering with National Healthy Housing Training Center and NCHH will continue, with plans for Bobbie to teach Healthy Homes for Community Health Workers. The challenge has been finding community health workers in La., but that's been solved by members of the La. HH Coalition.

In-service Training on Healthy Homes Solutions (HHS) curriculum:

The "piggy-back" solution made it possible. La. Extension FCS agents are dedicated to federal and state nutrition programs (SnapEd, EFNEP & Healthy Beginnings). So, a 2-day HHS training workshop was scheduled as the quarterly "health" training for them. Agents will use the lessons they deem appropriate within their programs - to bring HH education to their limited resource audiences.

The "carrots" were travel $ and teaching tools. A travel allocation of up to $350/person for up to 4 agents per region of La. resulted in statewide participation. Healthy Beginnings covered the paraprofessionals' expenses and working lunch, stretching project funds. Travel support was also provided for 3 Miss. Extension specialists, who will then train the Miss. field agents. The room was packed!

Turn-key toolkits to make it easy. Each agent received a fully stocked and assembled HHS Toolkit, a USB drive with all files, sample La. publications they can order, a set of Help Yourself to Healthy Homes books to use like a class text (not give away), and assorted "freebies." Each region received two flip-chart teaching kits (IAQ and Lead topics) to use when ppt isn't feasible.

Action Plans for impetus. Each agent answered in writing: What do you plan to implement? With whom? Which tools will you use? What else would be helpful? Any ideas, feedback, suggestions and benevolent gripes? All was summarized, producing an encouraging and interesting read -- and road map for the future.
Dovetail Outreach:

LaHouse Resource Center exhibits many healthy home features and consumer publications along with its energy-efficiency and hazard resilience exhibits. It was viewed by about 1000 people from Feb.-July who visited for varied purposes -- touring, meetings, trainings, youth field trips, organization social events, etc.

Ted, the Lead-Safe Renovator, is a mannequin dressed in full personal protective gear and his EPA Lead-Safe Certified Renovator ID badge, holding a You Can Prevent Lead Poisoning brochure and peering out of the nursery room closet of LaHouse -- with a sign encouraging kids to take a selfie and post it on social media. Ted gets quite a reaction!

LaHouse Facebook posts according to a monthly topic calendar, with healthy home topics featured during four months. Posts are designed to stimulate curiosity, provide little-known facts, use Q&A and other techniques to increase sharing and reach. 14 HH posts in 2015 had a combined reach of 5,452.

The Healthy Home Highlights e-newsletter launched in June to share information and ideas among HH Extension educators and collaborators nationwide. So far, 79 recipients have read it. That's 40% of the email list, which is apparently considered a high rate. HH Partners rock!

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Topic of the Month: Mold and Moisture Control

Mold is everywhere. It's nature's recycler, helping to break down dead materials. That's a good thing in nature, but NOT in our homes!

The key to mold control is moisture control. Mold growth begins on materials that say wet for more than 2-3 days and can multiply rapidly. After a flood, water leak or condensation, rapid drying can prevent a mold population explosion. Once growth happens, it's important to deal with it as soon as possible using safe and effective methods.

See the documents below for professional mold remediation protocols and the Resources for Reaching and Teaching section for guidance for consumers.

Mold Myths

MYTH: "Black mold" is the dangerous type.
Facts: Many species of mold are black. That term was coined to describe one species that was suspected of causing serious health effects. Regardless of color or species, any indoor mold growth should be considered a potential health hazard and safely removed.

MYTH: I see mold in my home, so I need mold testing.
Facts: Mold testing in a home is not usually needed or useful (unless required by a doctor, insurance policy or remediation contractor). If you see or smell mold, you have mold! Regardless of the type or quantity, it should be removed, and the sooner the better.

MYTH: I only need to test for and remediate "toxic mold."
Facts: Any type of mold is a potential health hazard and should be removed. Some species (including common indoor molds) can produce toxins in certain conditions. However, most tests don't detect whether or not toxins are present, so it is best to remove the mold.
Molds can produce toxins in certain conditions. However, most tests don't detect whether or not toxins are present, so testing is not usually helpful to answer health concerns.

**MYTH:** Bleach should be used to kill mold.

**Facts:** Dead mold and live mold can have the same health effects, so it's best to remove mold rather than just kill it. Bleach and other disinfectants can kill mold if in contact long enough, but are hazardous chemicals that also pose risks to people and some materials.

**Documents that provide guidance in the mold remediation industry:**


Chapter 15 of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH), *Bioaerosols Assessment and Control* (1999), deals with microbial remediation.


The EPA and NYC documents are available free online.

**Mold & Moisture Control Updates:**

Visit the Centers for Disease Control's [Mold After a Disaster webpage](http://www.cdc.gov/mold) for information on health effects, CDC guidance, press releases and links to more detailed information sources, including:

- Clean Up Safely After a Disaster
- Reentering Your Flooded Home
- Mold - General Resources
- Population-Specific Recommendations for Protection From Exposure to Mold in Flooded Buildings
- Check your HVAC system for Mold

The role that mycotoxins play in the big picture of people suffering negative health effects when they occupy water-damaged buildings (WDB) has been investigated for decades. In the July issue of *Healthy Indoors*, *The Mystery of Mycotoxins in Mold Contamination Messes* discusses how mycotoxins may negatively affect one's health.

With a growing awareness of the potential hazards of chemical and biological agents in our homes, schools and workplaces, a greater emphasis has been placed on *evaluating the role of mycotoxins and mycotoxin-producing fungi in our indoor environments*. *Mycotoxins and Indoor Molds* explains and discusses mycotoxins and the potential health effects of airborne molds and other biological contaminants.

Summer has arrived! Many people can expect to be running their air conditioners for the next few months. In this heat, AC is a welcomed relief, but we may be contaminating our indoor air without even realizing it. In *Air Conditioning: Both a Blessing and a Curse*, Jeffrey C. May outlines ways to *improve your indoor environment* and educated readers on how to avoid exposure to the products of microbial growth in their homes.

Two great sources of free building science research based articles and how-to guidance on moisture control in design, construction, HVAC equipment, and renovation of homes are [the Leaky return air plenums can draw unhealthy air from attics and crawlspaces through framing cavities.](http://www.buildinginnovationlab.com)
moisture control in design, construction, HVAC equipment, and renovation of homes are the U.S. Dept. of Energy’s Building American Solution Center and the information pages of www.buildingscience.com.

Next Issue's Topic: Asthma and Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Social Snacks

Here are short posting ideas on the topic of the month that you can use in your social media outreach to consumers.

PLEASE FEED ME! If you use social media for HH outreach, please send us your posts that produce big reach numbers to share in a future newsletter.

Got ducts in the attic or crawl space? They typically leak 30% of the air that moves through them! That wastes energy, money AND can cause moisture and mold problems. Visit Duct Sealing and Air Basics.

What could you do with 3 minutes & $100,000? Download Last House Standing on Apple or Android to determine if you can build a home to withstand Mother Nature's wrath!

#QuickFact Maintain indoor relative humidity under 60% to prevent mold growth. #Mold #Facts

Are you building a home now or in the future? Selecting the right materials in areas with high humidity and locations vulnerable to flooding or hurricanes can help you reduce damage to your home. Click here to find out how to select building materials that resist moisture.

News

Info on State Laws about Multi-family Housing HH Topics

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) worked with the National Center for Healthy Housing, HUD's Office of Healthy Homes and the CDC's Office of Healthy Housing for funding and support on this project. Here you will find resources and links to state laws regarding multi-family housing on topics such as energy efficiency, moisture and weatherproofing, lead, carbon monoxide, and radon.

Green Renovation and Senior Living - Three Years of Healthier, Happier Residents

Three recent articles illustrate how innovative green building practices and amenities help ensure that low-income seniors feel healthier and stay mobile, active, social, and most of all, independent. Read more...

Appropriations Update: Funding for Healthy Housing and Lead Poisoning Prevention

The good news is that the Senate appropriations committee voted on June 25 for level funding for HUD and CDC healthy homes, lead poisoning prevention, and lead hazard control programs! Unfortunately, both Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Health and Human Services (HHS) suffered billions of dollars in funding cuts overall. Read More...

GOT NEWS? Send it to us! Share any news and resources of interest to other HHP partners!

Resources for Reaching and Teaching

The www.hud.gov/healthyhomes website now includes a Disaster Recovery Resources page with a special focus on how to identify and minimize potential health hazards in damaged homes, including...
a special focus on how to identify and minimize potential health hazards in damaged homes, including mold. This is the page where people can find the new Rebuild Healthy Homes publication and mobile app, as well as information on each type major health hazard, and three short new videos with advice for homeowners on returning to flooded homes.

**Addressing Mold After a Natural Disaster** is one of the 3 new videos for homeowner disaster victims listed on the HUD Disaster Recovery Resources page. It’s a three-minute introduction to the same 10 Steps for safe and effective do-it-yourself mold removal as described in the Rebuild Healthy Homes publication (see below), narrated by La. Extension housing specialist, Claudette Reichel.

The EPA website [www.epa.gov/mold](http://www.epa.gov/mold) provides a wealth of information and free publications (some in print, some downloadable versions) on mold basics, cleanup guidelines, prevention and control tips, in addition to many more topics concerning mold and moisture. The URL is easy to remember and communicate to consumers -- so is handy to know.

**A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home** is a consumer-friendly EPA publication that provides background information and guidance for homeowners and renters on how to clean up residential mold problems and how to prevent mold growth. It is available online in HTML or PDF. This document is meant to be used as recommendations since EPA does not regulate mold or mold spores in indoor air.

**Take the Mold Course** for environmental and public health professionals that provides an introduction to mold and mold remediation via a presentation and online course. The course and the document on which it is based (EPA’s 2001 guidance document *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings*) provide guidelines; other cleaning and remediation methods may be preferred by some professionals. This course does not cover all situations and all potentially useful methods or techniques.

**Mold, Housing & Wood** is a document published in 2006 addressing common questions about moisture, mold and wood. This paper was prepared by Coreen Robbins, Ph.D., CIH and Jeff Morrell, Ph.D. at the request of Western Wood Products Association in order to address some common questions about mold and wood. (PDF Format Only)

**Mold Removal Guidelines For Your Flooded Home** is a two-page fact sheet developed by Louisiana Extension (Claudette Reichel) following hurricane Katrina to meet the demand for simple guidance that was easy to mass produce and provide to the thousands of disaster victims and residents dealing with mold in their flooded homes. It provides basic steps to use in safely cleaning up mold in homes and preventing its regrowth. It is focused on mold resulting from flooding but is applicable to other causes as well. (PDF Format Only)

**Hiring a Mold Remediation Contractor** was originally developed following hurricane Katrina by Extension housing specialists Joe Laquatra (NY) and Claudette Reichel (LA) but was updated in 2015 for national use. Hiring a trained and qualify professional for mold remediation is generally safer and more effective than a “do-it-yourself” approach because of the use of specialized equipment and knowledge. This publication provides guidance on safe and effective mold remediation practices and how to select a qualified remediation professional. (PDF Format only)

**America’s PrepareAthon!** is a campaign for action to increase community preparedness and resilience. Resources are provided for six common hazards: earthquake, flood, hurricane, tornado, wildfire, and winter storm. It provides educational material to help understand risk and how to prepare for each hazard.

**Rebuild Healthy Homes: A guide to Post-Disaster Restoration for a Safe and Healthy Home** is a FREE online PDF and mobile app with detailed “how-to” guidance for homeowners and volunteers. It introduces the 8 principles of HH, addresses damages from all major types of disasters; personal protection; how to assess damages and hazards, create a work plan, prep the site, clean-out, clean and decontaminate; and describes resilient and healthy home improvements to include during restoration. (Primary authors are our own HHP Extension specialists Claudette Hanks Reichel, LSU, and Michael Goldschmidt, MU.)

**Help Yourself to a Healthy Home: Protect Your Children’s Health**
is the core consumer education publication of the HHP, providing a highly illustrated, friendly read. It covers the full range of home health hazards, the concerns about each, questions to ask and -- best of all -- practical action steps to ensure a healthy home. It's available as an online pdf. Limited print copies may be available through HHP. FYI: The next edition is currently in development!

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Upcoming Events

A Guided Overview of the OLHCHH Disaster Recovery Resource Landscape - Aug. 4, 2015
This webinar will provide technical assistance resources and guidance on rebuilding healthy indoor environments. You will gain new insight on resident/worker safety in a post-disaster setting on mold, lead, radon and asbestos. Resources available for Disaster Response facilitators and volunteer organizations will be explored. Participants will also have the opportunity to engage collaboratively with federal agency partners and provide their insights.

Breathing Easy at Home: Partnering to Increase Smoke-Free Policies in Federally Assisted Housing - Aug. 5, 2015
In this webinar, learn about smoke-free housing policy in multifamily housing and the national momentum surrounding it. Presenters will speak on health disparities, policy implementation and best practices.

This Healthy Homes Partnership webinar will be hosted by Martha Keel and Bonnie Hinds of the University of Tennessee. More information will be sent out soon.

Pests and Pesticides HHP Webinar - Aug. 28, 2015
This Healthy Homes Partnership webinar will be hosted by Martha Keel and Bonnie Hinds of the University of Tennessee. More information will be sent out soon.

National Lead and Healthy Housing Conference - New Orleans, LA Oct. 6-8-2015
This conference features “how to” workshops dealing with childhood lead poisoning prevention, lead hazard control, and healthy and green housing. Includes "Don't Reinvent the Wheel" displays of educational and outreach materials various organizations have created to reach out to populations in their community.

EEBA Excellence in Building Conference & Expo - Denver, CO Oct. 6-8, 2015
The 2015 Energy and Environmental Building Alliance (EEBA) conference includes 50+ educational sessions covering every facet of building science, including a track on “Fresh Air” (IAQ). From a deeper understanding of green building and what's new in building science, to the latest news on innovations, participants will find leading experts, solutions and best practices.

Housing Education and Research Association (HERA) Conference - Springfield, IL Oct. 11-14, 2015
Celebrating Our Past, Planning for the Future is the theme of the next annual meeting of the professional association of housing researchers, teachers, Extension educators and other professionals. The event features presentations, posters, and keynote speakers in an atmosphere that fosters intellectual growth and development. Come, share and discuss the latest housing challenges!

This is a NE region conference of the Home Performance Coalition, formerly known as Affordable Comfort, Inc., featuring educational sessions by leading experts in weatherization and home performance (i.e. home energy upgrades that protect indoor air quality and durability).

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*Good Health Starts at Home* builds upon the Healthy Homes initiatives and partnership of the United States Department of Agriculture-National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development-Office of Healthy Homes and lead Hazard Control (HUD) that address housing-based health and safety risks. Its network of state coordinators have partnered with state agencies, medical professionals, schools, and community groups to educate families on home health hazards.

*Healthy Homes Highlights* is produced by LSU AgCenter's LaHouse Resource Center. Authors: Claudette Hanks Reichel, Professor and Extension Housing Specialist, and Annemarie Resweber, LaHouse Graduate Assistant.