

## **OVERVIEW OF HOUSING AND HOUSING-RELATED HEALTH ISSUES IN CONNECTICUT**

Connecticut is the fourth most densely populated state in the nation, with 88% of residents living in urban areas.

Striking disparities exist across town lines, among racial and ethnic groups, and between urban and rural populations.

Poverty rates increased from 7.3% of Connecticut residents 2001 to 9.4% in 2009.

In 2009, 12.1% of Connecticut's children lived in families with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level. (US Census, American Community Survey)

### **CONNECTICUT HOUSING STOCK**

There are a total of 1,445,840 housing units in Connecticut  
(US Census, American Community Survey, 2009)

Connecticut's housing stock is considerably older than the national average. (US Census, 2000)

- 78% of Connecticut's housing stock was built prior to 1980 compared to 67% nationally
- 48% of Connecticut's housing stock was built prior to 1960 compared to 35% nationally

35% of Connecticut's housing stock was built before 1950. (US Census, 2000)

Approximately 69% of Connecticut's housing stock is owner occupied and 31% is renter occupied. (US Census, American Community Survey, 2009)

### **ASBESTOS**

Approximately 60% of the abatement notifications received by DPH involve residential properties for renovation or demolition

Of demolition notifications received by DPH approximately 75% involve residential properties.

Between July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010:

- Total asbestos abatement notifications – 3,385 (Notification is required on projects involving more than 10 linear feet or more than 25 square feet of asbestos-containing material)
- Total demolition notifications – 229

## **ASTHMA**

The prevalence in asthma in Connecticut increased from 7.8% in 2000 to 9.3% in 2006, slightly higher than the U.S. as a whole.

In 2006, 13.8% of Connecticut adults reported having been ever diagnosed with asthma and 9.3% reported currently having asthma.

In 2005, 14.9% (123,000) of Connecticut children reported ever having been diagnosed with asthma, and 10.5% (86,000) reported that they currently have asthma.

Residents of Connecticut's five large cities (Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, Stamford, and Waterbury) were nearly 3 times more likely to be hospitalized or visit an emergency department for their asthma and 2 times more likely to die from asthma than residents from the rest of Connecticut.

## **UNINTENTIONAL INJURY**

Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for Connecticut residents between the ages of 1 and 44 years and the 5<sup>th</sup> leading cause for all ages.

Falls, poisonings, fire/burns, choking/suffocation, and drowning are leading causes of the unintentional injury in the home, and are responsible for approximately two thirds of all Connecticut's injury-related deaths.

Between 2005-2007 there were 730 deaths, 10,158 hospitalizations and 106,483 emergency department visits due to the 5 leading cause of home injury in Connecticut.

- Inpatient hospital charges totaled \$695 million during this time period for the top 5 causes.

## **LEAD POISONING**

In 2008, 1,054 children under six had blood lead levels of greater than or equal to 10µg/dL.

Black and Hispanic children in urban areas have the highest percentages of elevated blood lead levels in Connecticut.

Two major sources of lead exposure remain a significant health threat for children:

- Deteriorated lead-based paint in older housing
- Urban dust and soil that has been contaminated by the previous use of leaded gasoline and the deterioration of exterior lead-based paint on dwellings.

Connecticut ranks among the top 15 states with the highest levels of at-risk housing.

## **RADON**

The EPA estimates that radon is responsible for more than 22,000 lung cancer deaths per year nationally.

922 public Schools in Connecticut have been tested for Radon to date.

- 91 schools (327 school rooms) have reduced elevated radon levels with mitigation.

Connecticut's Radon potential map shows a potential for high levels (>4pCi/L) of Radon in the shoreline counties (Fairfield, New Haven, Middlesex, New London) and moderate levels (2-4pCi/L) in the northeast and northwest counties (Windham, Tolland, Litchfield).

## **PRIVATE WELLS AND DRINKING WATER**

- There are approximately 400,000 private wells in Connecticut.
- Nearly 15% of the State's population, approximately 510,000 people are served by their own drinking water supply.

## **INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

People spend 90% of their time indoors.

Indoor air pollutants include: insects, rodents, dust/dirt, mold, bacteria/viruses, carbon monoxide (CO), chemicals such as mercury, formaldehyde, pesticides and household cleaners, and allergens such as pollen and animal dander.

Seventy percent of the calls received by the CT DPH Environmental and Occupational Health Program are related to Indoor Environmental Quality issues.

## **TOBACCO**

Approximately 5,600 people (smokers and non-smokers) in Connecticut die each year from smoking-related causes.

Over 450,000 adults in Connecticut smoke cigarettes.

Approximately 100,000 middle and high school students in Connecticut live with someone who currently smokes cigarettes.

The rate of smoking among adults in Connecticut has fallen between 1995 and 2008; the lowest smoking rates were in 2007 (15.4%), which was significantly lower than any rates prior to 2005.

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