
letters



Lead poisoning a major concern

By [Bee Group Newspapers](#) | on November 17, 2021

In 2014, Flint, Michigan took center stage in the American lead poisoning crisis. However, many U.S cities have experienced this issue at a far greater impact, including Buffalo. It was found by Reuters Investigates that 17 of the city's zip codes have double the rates of childhood lead poisoning compared to Flint. There is one common thread among the cities with high lead poisoning: the areas most affected are Black communities. A state-established organization in Flint concluded the low political effort to reduce lead levels can be traced to systemic racism. This is true for Buffalo. Additionally, the combination of high poverty and old housing has made the city even more vulnerable to the crisis. While the current mayoral administration has discussed plans to address the problem, Buffalo's blood lead levels in children have not seen a substantial decline. One reason for this is poor regulation of landlords. Rental homes account for 80% of the properties where children are lead poisoned. Moreover, lead poisoning in older homes wouldn't be as much of an issue if Buffalo built new, affordable housing. Lead poisoning is not being treated with the urgency it deserves.

The future rests in the minds of our children. If they can not develop to their fullest because the local government doesn't take action, then change needs to be made. The children of Buffalo have a right to lead-free homes. And I think Amherst residents can help their neighbors by spreading awareness and supporting Buffalo organizations that fight for better housing and equality.

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