

**City Council Testimony 5/28/14****Perry Cabot – Multnomah County Health Department/Environmental Health**

Good Afternoon. I'd like to thank the Council and Director Shaff for the opportunity to speak to you today.

My name is Perry Cabot and I am a Program Specialist with the Multnomah County Environmental Health Program. My position coordinates the County Leadline program, largely through a grant from the Portland Water Bureau through the Lead Hazard Reduction Partnership. For many years, the Multnomah County Health Department's Leadline Program has worked in close partnership with the Portland Water Bureau through the Lead Hazard Reduction Partnership to provide a front-line response to the issue of lead poisoning in our community.

The Leadline provides several important services to the residents of the City of Portland and surrounding areas. First, the Leadline is the central triage point for community concerns and questions around lead poisoning and lead poisoning prevention. We address these concerns and questions directly or we connect these community members with the appropriate partner resource through the Lead Hazard Reduction Partnership.

Second, all Portland Water Bureau customers, including customers in surrounding water districts who purchase water from the Portland Water Bureau, have the option of receiving a free kit to test their home tap water for lead. All of these requests and the accompanying questions and education of these customers is the responsibility of the Leadline. In recent months, we have handled thousands of calls and emails from customers seeking testing kits and information about lead in water.

The Leadline also provides free blood lead screening for over one thousand young children and pregnant women each year in an effort to identify and respond to lead exposures in our community before they become chronic or higher levels with real risk of permanent injury to a child's developing nervous system.

Finally, the Leadline provides free home environmental investigations for any and all children who are identified through our screening clinics or through a blood test at their doctor as having an elevated level of lead in their blood. We seek to identify the source of lead exposure in the home and then connect these families with the information and resources necessary to take control of their own fears and move forward toward the health, wellness and safety of their family.

The old scourge of lead poisoning still haunts our communities. While the vast majority of cases are found to be connected to paint and dust in our older homes, the support of the City's Lead Hazard Reduction grant places Portland in the forefront of cities across the country in terms of progressive and proactive community resources around all aspects of lead poisoning prevention. On behalf of the many and diverse families that I serve through this program, I thank you for your time and your support and look forward to our continued partnership.