HOUSING INSPECTIONS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Environmental Health

Maurice Pantoja, Chief
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
Environmental Health

- Division within Department of Public Health
- 5 Bureaus, 26 Programs, 700 employees
- Inspections/Services:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurants</th>
<th>Jails</th>
<th>Garment Manufacturing</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Markets</td>
<td>Daycare Facilities</td>
<td>Landfills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesalers</td>
<td>Dormitories</td>
<td>Water Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Processing Plants</td>
<td>Swimming Pools</td>
<td>Body Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food carts/trucks</td>
<td>Spas</td>
<td>Radiological Devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering</td>
<td>Massage Parlors</td>
<td>Child Lead Poisoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apartments</strong></td>
<td><strong>Beaches</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bio-Terrorism</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Stadiums</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vector Surveillance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels/Motels</td>
<td><strong>Fairs/Farmers Market</strong></td>
<td><strong>Illegal Vendor Sweeps</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jurisdiction

- 85 of 88 incorporated cities (Long Beach, Pasadena, Vernon)

- All unincorporated areas of the County
DISTRICT SURVEILLANCE AND ENFORCEMENT BUREAU (DSE)
DSE

- Food & Housing inspections
- 16 District offices

- 240 Environmental Health Specialists (inspectors)
- 60,000 MFD sites (5 or more units)
- Proactive – Routine Inspections
- Reactive – Complaints & Referrals
Authority

Los Angeles County Code Title 11

• Public Health License required for MFDs
• Authority to make routine inspections
• Authorized Right-of-Entry
• Enforce Title 11 requirements
• Enforce CA Health & Safety Code
• Enforce Statutes relating to public health
Housing Inspections

• Risk based system
  – Highest risk sites inspected twice per year
  – Most inspected once per year
  – More units checked at higher risk properties

• Unannounced Inspections

• Inspect common/public areas

• Inspect available units
Hazards addressed by EH

- Insects/Pests
- Rodents
- Maintenance
- Sanitation
- Mold
- Peeling Paint and Lead-safe work practices
- Sewage
- Uncontrolled moisture
- Inadequate ventilation
- Swimming Pools
Mold

- No standards exist for mold
- EH does not test for mold
- Address sources of moisture leading to mold growth
- We can’t open walls
Compliance & Enforcement

- Report issued to owner for all violations
- Reinspect after 21 days to ensure compliance
  - Administrative Office Hearing scheduled for non-compliance
  - Referral to City/District Attorney for continued non-compliance
  - Referral to Franchise Tax Board
  - Court
Limitations of Inspections

- Not all units inspected
- Lengthy process to gain compliance
- Requires tenant cooperation
Complaints

5 units or more:
• Field investigation within 3 working days
• Full Routine inspection if due

1-4 units:
• Field investigation if complaint is an emergency (sewage/no water/immediate hazard)
• “Alleged Violation” letter sent
Healthy Housing Through Enforcement

- Pro-active inspection at 60,000 sites
- Address HH principles:
  - ✓ Keep it Maintained
  - ✓ Keep it Pest Free
  - ✓ Keep it Ventilated
  - ✓ Keep it Contaminant Free
  - ✓ Keep it Safe
  - ✓ Keep it Dry
  - ✓ Keep it Clean
Hazards not addressed by routine inspections

- Asthma/allergens
- Environmental tobacco smoke
- Unintentional injuries (including fires)
- Child Safety
- Radon
- Safe Food handling
- Lead candy, pottery
Healthy Homes Program

• Make an impact on a larger scale than traditional HH grant programs
• Utilize existing housing inspection program
• Identify hazards not enforceable by our program
• 5000 high risk sites selected for HH inspections
• No outside funding $$$
Goals for HH Inspections

In addition to code enforcement:

- Encourage owners to reduce/eliminate non-enforceable hazards;
- Increase owner/tenant awareness of potential health and safety hazards; and
- Encourage tenants to discontinue hazardous behaviors.
# HH Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Asthma/Child Safety</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smoking inside unit</td>
<td>Clean using HEPA vacuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Quality – ventilate unit</td>
<td>Wet cleaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trip/Falls</td>
<td>Pets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Temp – scalding</td>
<td>Mold/Mildew clean-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper house cleaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clutter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overloaded electrical outlets</td>
<td>Lead toys, jewelry, pottery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocked emergency exits</td>
<td>Home remedies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candles/fire safety</td>
<td>Window blind cords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flammable items</td>
<td>Electric outlet covers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe food handling</td>
<td>Safe chemical storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unapproved heating devices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turtles or Reptiles – not safe pets</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Tools for HH Inspections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Official Inspection Report</th>
<th>HH Property Owner Recommendation Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official Notice of Violation</td>
<td>HH Tenant Condition Checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Notice</td>
<td>“Stepping Stones to a Healthy Home” handout</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limitations of HH Inspections

- Only making Recommendations
- Limited follow-up
- No incentives
- Language barriers
www.publichealth.lacounty.gov
Contact Us

DSE Administration: 626-430-5200
EH Hotline: 888-700-9995

Lead Program
- General lead information 1-800-LA-4-LEAD
- Make a lead complaint 323-869-7068

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Questions?

Thank you!