

DEMOLITION IS HAPPENING WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW



Photo Credit: Associated Press



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES CORE CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

www.ehscc.umich.edu

Dedication

We wish to dedicate this handbook to Detroit and Southeast Michigan residents who experience demolitions in their community. We hope that this handbook will address the concerns you have raised regarding the health and safety of your community during demolitions.

Special thanks to hard work of the University of Michigan Environmental Health Science Core Center Community Outreach and Education Core for making this handbook possible, and in particular thanks to the NIEHS Center in Urban Environmental Health at The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who allowed us to use their *What to Do about Demolition Hazards* as a model for this handbook.



Urban Demolition

Some Important Things to Know

- Sometimes all or some of the houses on a block are demolished.
- Demolition includes knocking down houses, removing debris, and covering the site with dirt or gravel.
- The entire job can take 2 to 3 weeks. Most of this time is usually spent taking away the debris in trucks.
- Demolition work usually takes place between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Community concerns about demolition include dust, lead, allergy and asthma, safety, rats and cockroaches, waste water, noise and vibration.
- It is important to know what to do about these potential hazards.

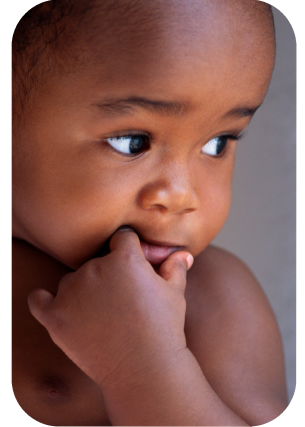


Photo Credit: Associated Press

LEAD IN DUST

WHAT TO KNOW:

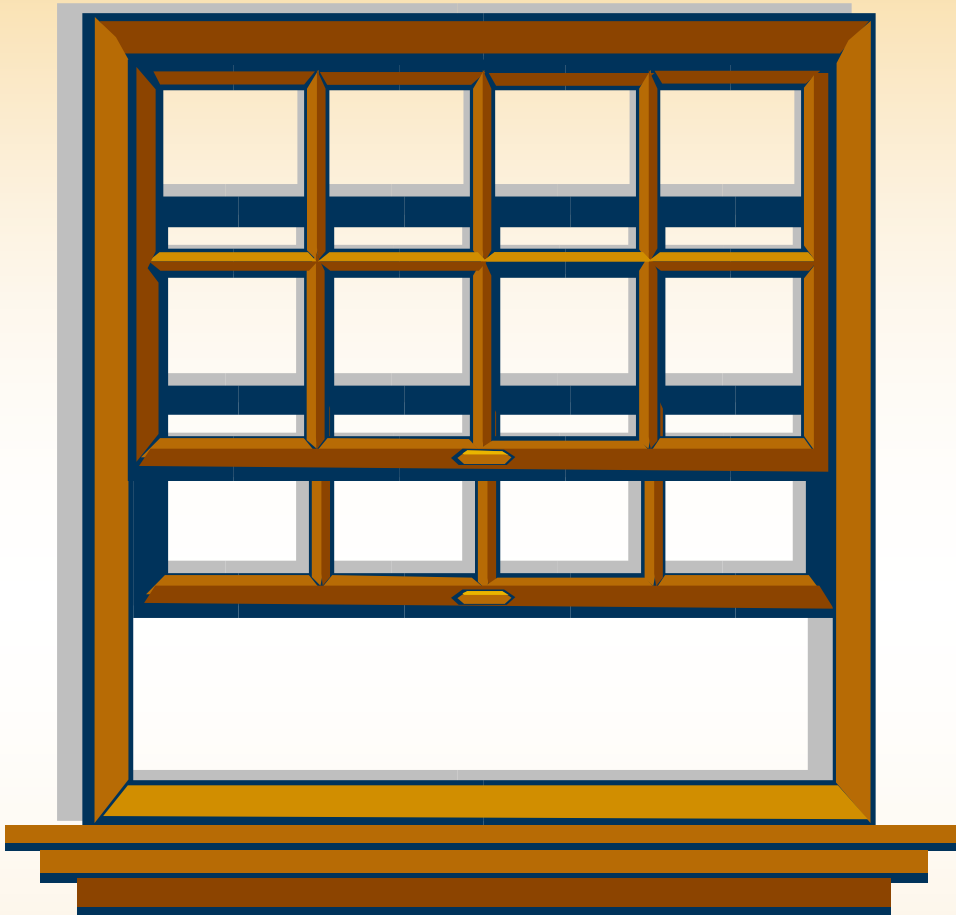
- Demolition creates dust.
- This dust can get into your house.
- Dust from demolition can have lead in it.
- Children can swallow lead dust when they put dust covered toys and fingers in their mouths.
- Lead poisoning can cause learning, behavior, and health problems in children.



WHAT TO DO DURING DEMOLITION AND DEBRIS REMOVAL:

- Plan to be away from your home during the demolition work, if possible.
- Keep your windows and doors closed and keep pets inside.
- Do not hang laundry outside.
- Cover all gardens and soil beds with plastic tarp
- Place floor mats inside all entryways to wipe the dust off your shoes.
- Remove shoes at entry.
- Wet mop floors and vacuum carpets every day.
- Wash window skills and window wells every day.
- Hose down outside furniture and surfaces around your house every day.





Wash window sills and window wells every day when demolition and debris removal are underway.

ALLERGY & ASTHMA

WHAT TO KNOW:

- Demolition creates dust.
- Dust may cause allergy and asthma symptoms

WHAT TO DO DURING DEMOLITION AND DEBRIS REMOVAL:

- Plan to be away from your home during the demolition work, if possible.
- Keep your windows and doors closed.
- Place floor mats inside all entryways.
- Wet mop floors and vacuum carpets every day.
- Wash window sills and window wells every day.
- Hose down outside furniture and surfaces around your house every day.



WHO TO CALL:

- Your Doctor
- Asthma Initiative of Michigan.....1-866-EZLUNGS



SAFETY

WHAT TO KNOW:

- Demolition sites are dangerous, and children are at risk for being hurt.
- Vacant houses marked for demolition are not safe.
- Heavy equipment and tools used during demolition can be dangerous.
- Demolition creates piles of unsafe debris.
- Vacant lots left after demolition may become a dumping site for dangerous materials and trash.



WHAT TO DO:

- Keep children away from vacant houses.
- Keep children away from demolition site.
- Watch your children more closely during demolition. Keep children away from heavy equipment, from demolition debris and vacant lots.
- Do not stand nearby and watch demolition work.
- Remove or secure pictures and wall hanging to prevent them from falling during demolition.

WHO TO CALL:

Ask workers for Demolition Contractors contact information

RATS & PESTS

WHAT TO KNOW:

- Vacant houses can have rats, mice, roaches and other pests.
- Rats, roaches and other pests may live in debris piles.
- Trash on the vacant lot attracts these pests.
- Rats, mice, and roaches can get into your home.



WHAT TO DO:

- Avoid extermination of pests and the use of harmful chemicals
- Prevent the pest from entering by sealing with caulk any holes in your homes foundation that are larger than 1/4 inch
- Fix plumbing and water leaks. Some pests like warm moist environments.
- Keep trash in a closed metal container.
- Report dumping of trash on vacant lots.
- If rats and mice are still a problem you may think of getting an energetic cat.



WASTE WATER

WHAT TO KNOW:

- Water sprayed during demolition can settle around the site in cracks and puddles.
- Water from a demolition site can enter your basement and can cause mold to grow.
- Mold can cause allergy and asthma symptoms.

WHAT TO DO:

- Keep children from playing in or near puddles.
- Dry your basement as soon as possible.

WHO TO CALL:

If water from a demolition site enters your basement, call:

- Site Contractor
- Your property owner
- Your insurance Company

For wet vacuum rental and dehumidifier purchase or rental:

- Call or visit your local hardware store

NOISE AND VIBRATION

WHAT TO KNOW:

- The area around a demolition site can be noisy because heavy trucks and equipment are used.
- Wall hangings can fall down due to vibration from the equipment.



WHAT TO DO:

- Plan to be away from your home during the demolition work, if possible.
- Use earplugs to reduce noise.
- Remove or secure pictures and wall hangings to prevent them from falling.

WHO TO CALL:

If damage occurs during the demolition, contact:

- Demolition contractor
- Your Property Owner
- Your Insurance Company

University of Michigan Environmental Health Science Core Center Stakeholder Advisory Board

Jaye I. Clement is the Director of Community Health Programs and Strategies of Henry Ford Health System (HFHS);

Paul Harbin is the Team Leader of the Environmental Health Section for the Institute for Population Health (IPH);

Alisha Opperman is the Community Engagement Project Manager of Warren-Conner Development Coalition (WCDC);

Erminia Ramirez is the Director of Community Relations and Outreach at Community Health and Social Services (CHASS) Center, Inc.;

Angela Reyes is the Founder and Executive Director of the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation (DHDC);

Sheryl Shellman Weir is the Section Manager of the Michigan Department of Community Health, Health Disparities Reduction and Minority Health Section (HDRMN);

Sherita Smith is a community-member-at-large;

Donele Wilkins is the President and CEO of the Green Door Initiative; and

Guy O. Williams is the President and CEO for Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice (DWEJ).

The logo for the Green Door Initiative, featuring the word "greendoor" in a green, lowercase, sans-serif font, with "initiative" in a smaller, black, lowercase, sans-serif font below it.The logo for Imagine Creative Opportunities Now (ICON), featuring the text "Imagine Creative Opportunities Now (ICON)" in a black, serif font, arranged in four lines.The logo for the Michigan School of Public Health, featuring a large yellow "M" followed by a vertical bar and the letters "SPH" in blue.The logo for the Institute for Population Health (IPH), featuring a stylized red and white figure above the letters "IPH" in a bold, black, serif font, with "Institute for Population Health" in a smaller font below.

Detroit Hispanic
Development
Corporation
(DHDC)

The logo for CHASS (Community Health And Social Services Center), featuring a stylized cross made of four colored lines (green, red, blue, yellow) and the text "CHASS" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, with "Community Health And Social Services Center" in a smaller font below.The logo for the Henry Ford Health System, featuring the name "Henry Ford" in a blue, cursive font, with "HEALTH SYSTEM" in a blue, sans-serif font below it, all enclosed in a blue oval.

Detroiters
Working for
Environmental
Justice

The logo for the Warren/Conner Development Coalition, featuring the text "Warren/Conner" in a large, green, serif font, with "DEVELOPMENT COALITION" in a smaller, green, sans-serif font below it.The logo for the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), featuring the letters "MDCH" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with "Department of Community Health" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE CALL

ASTHMA AND ALLERGY

Asthma Initiative of Michigan.....1-866-EZLUNGS

HOME SAFETY

Safe Kids Michigan.....(517) 335-9519

ILLEGAL DUMPING & VACANT LOT CLEAN UP

City of Detroit Department of Public Works

- Environmental Enforcement. (Illegal dumping complaint).....313-876-0974

City of Detroit Property Maintenance Division

- Vacant Building Complaints.....(313) 628-2451

LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

Michigan Department of Community Health

- Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program..... (517) 335-8885

- Lead hotline.....1-866-691-5323

POISON CONTROL CENTER.....1-800-222-1222

SITE SAFETY

City of Detroit Buildings Safety Engineering and Environmental Department

- To Report dangerous/abandoned buildings.....(313) 224-3215

WASTE WATER MANAGEMENT

Detroit Water and Sewerage Department

Overflow or backup of the sewer.....(313) 267-7401

311 Call Center for city services and information:

From a landline.....311

From a cellular phone.....(313)-224-INFO (4636)