

AT HOME CAMBRIDGE

City of Cambridge Housing Department Newsletter



Spring Into Preventive Home Maintenance

The sun is shining on us a little longer each day, flower buds are bursting forth, the color “grass green” is getting a little deeper and all signs point to the awakening of spring. You can almost feel it in the air, can’t you? A little added depth to your breath, a little extra pep in your step.

For homeowners, spring is one of the two recommended times of year to use that extra pep in your step to complete a walkthrough of your home and property. It is the perfect time to complete your semi-annual preventive maintenance checklist to identify any health and safety concerns around the home. Read the Spring Into Savings section on page 3 to learn about routine home maintenance as a money-saving investment and where to get a checklist to complete the spring maintenance walkthrough on your home.



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Housing Department In the Community

The City of Cambridge Housing Department team has been busy over the past several months making progress on the current efforts aimed at supporting residents' right to quality housing that is affordable, safe, and healthy.

Community outreach is critical and staff has been out and about attending local events and meeting with a variety of residents.

Around town in January:

- Ice and Oyster Festival
- Community Meeting at the Elks Lodge
- Presentation to the Rotary
- Meeting with Seniors at the Intergenerational Center

Around town in February:

- Presentation to the Early Childhood Advocacy Council
- Meeting with Seniors at the Intergenerational Center
- City Council Housing Department Update
- Hard Hats Tour of Douglas Street Construction Project

Around town in March:

- Douglas Street Information Session at the Packing House
- DC Health Department Resource Fair
- Meeting with Seniors at the Intergenerational Center

Staff also plans to host a meeting in each ward over the next several months.

Where would you like to see us in the community? We strive to meet with residents and organizations in places that are convenient to them. If you are interested in hearing more about the Housing Department or would like to share your housing concerns, please contact us.

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

“ALONE, WE CAN DO SO LITTLE; TOGETHER, WE CAN DO SO MUCH”

HELEN KELLER

If you want to go fast,
GO ALONE.

If you want to go far,
GO TOGETHER.

~MEG WHEATLEY





Failure to invest
in routine
maintenance
today will add
cost to repairs
tomorrow.



Spring into Savings with Routine Home Maintenance

Your home is usually your biggest investment and should be cared for as such. Using a Healthy Homes Maintenance Checklist allows you to inspect your home for concerns and complete routine maintenance. By resolving concerns and completing maintenance you are investing today in the value of your home for tomorrow.

Financial benefits of routine maintenance include:

- save money on costly repairs
- extend the lifespan of systems and appliances
- enhance personal health and safety
- maintain property value

Determine if you can DIY the maintenance task or need to call in a professional for the work. Ask yourself a few questions to help determine the answer.

- Do I have the skills to perform the task?
- Can I perform the task safely?
- Do I have the time to start and finish the task?

Typical springtime maintenance includes:

- Testing smoke detectors
- Annual tune-up for air conditioning system
- Checking plumbing fixtures for leaks
- Inspect windows and doors
- Cleaning gutters and downspouts

To get your copy of the complete Healthy Homes Maintenance Checklist, you can visit https://nchh.org/resource-library/healthy-homes-maintenance-checklist_english.pdf or stop by the Housing Department at 1025 Washington Street, Cambridge, MD.

Homeownership Works

Douglas Street in Full Swing

Homeownership Works

Chances are, if you have driven down Washington Street recently, you have noticed four new houses being built at the corner of Philips and Douglas Streets. The houses are part of the City’s Homeownership Works Initiative.



With funding provided through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the City, in collaboration with developer Home Partnership Inc, is constructing quality homes that present an opportunity of homeownership for low-to-moderate income households.

The first house to be completed will be finished in May, with the other three houses concluding construction prior to August. Details about the houses, homebuyer eligibility and the application process can be found at: Pinewoodglenhomes.com.



Current Initiatives:

This page:

- Homeownership Works





Current Initiatives:

This page:

- Homeowner Helper Program
- Lead Hazard Reduction Capacity Building

Homeowner Helper Program

Fast Facts

- Available to residents of the City of Cambridge over age 50.
- Property must be owned by and the primary residence of applicant.
- Assistance on projects ranging from \$1,000-\$15,000.
- Focus on structural, mechanical and facade improvements.
- 0% interest loan repayable in a 36-month installment repayment plan or at transfer of deed.



Lead Hazard Reduction Capacity Building

Fast Facts

- Designed to develop strategies and resources needed to implement and sustain a program to reduce lead-based paint hazards in residential properties.
- Strong focus on community engagement through education and awareness campaigns.
- Has a lead-hazard activities workers workforce development component.
- Lead-based paint hazard reduction work is Phase III of capacity building and will begin after the strategies and resources are well developed and implemented.
- Activities will focus on properties built prior to 1978.
- Capacity building is required to pursue future funding for lead-based paint hazard reduction work.





Lead-Based Paint in Housing

Five Facts About Lead-Based Paint Hazards

1. Health affects from lead poisoning are permanent.
2. Children under six and pregnant women are more vulnerable to lead poisoning.
3. Housing built before 1978 could have lead-based paint, and housing built before 1950 is highly likely to have lead-based paint.
4. Lead dust cannot be seen, yet creates the greatest risk for lead poisoning.
5. Lead poisoning can happen when lead particles from dust or paint chips are eaten or breathed in.

Cycle of Lead Poisoning

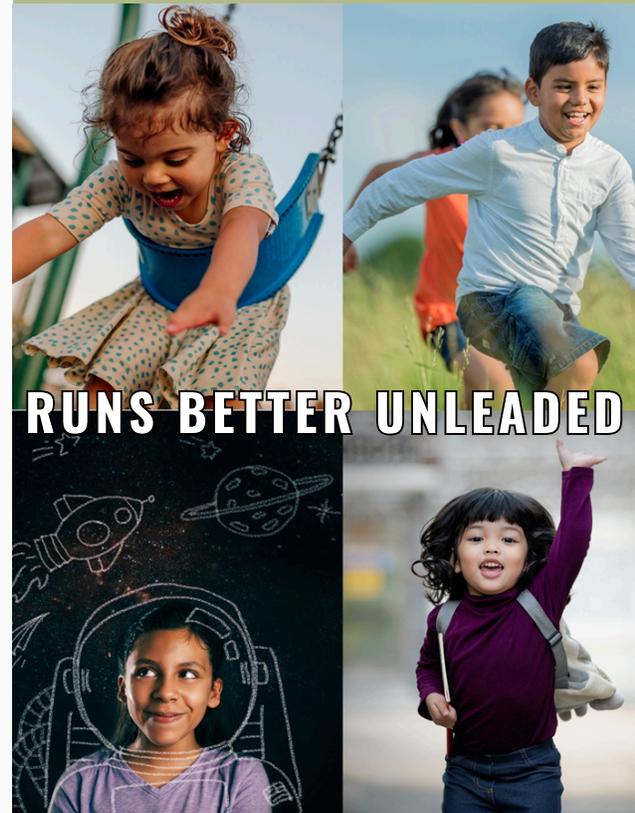


Sources of Lead-Based Paint Hazard

Exposure in Housing

1. Deteriorated lead-based paint in a home.
2. Painting or construction work on properties built prior to 1978.
3. Bare soil that is contaminated with lead.
4. Cross contamination of clothes, vehicles and homes of workers who paint or renovate properties built before 1978.

Any housing built before 1978 could have lead-based paint hazards.



RUNS BETTER UNLEADED



Helpful Hints for First Time Homebuyers

Buying your first home can be equal parts exciting and overwhelming. The insights below can help you navigate the process with a little more ease.

Learn before you lean.

- Learn everything you can before starting the homebuying process.
- Seek advice from professionals, especially on things you do not fully understand.
- If you do not understand something, pause, get answer, then move forward.
- Do not rush! This is a big decision, you set the pace for the process.

Budget before you buy.

- Understand all the costs associated with purchasing a home.
- Explore first time homebuyer assistance options that may be available.
- Know for yourself what you can afford based on your net income budget. Do not expect a lender to understand your budget.

Consider before you “close”.

- Never buy a home without getting a home inspection.
- Understand the pros and cons of each available financing option for your home purchase.
- Shop for homes with a price that falls within your budget.

See before you sign.

- Review all documents during the home purchase process prior to signing.
- If you do not understand it, do not sign it.
- Seek guidance until you fully understand what you are signing.

If you are new to homebuying, consider speaking with a Housing Counselor today.

SEE THE “RESOURCES” SECTION ON PAGE 8



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Resources

Healthy Homes Maintenance Checklist



Find a Certified Housing Counselor:
<https://www.hud.gov/counseling>

Reduce Potential Lead Exposure



City of Cambridge Housing Department

1025 Washington Street
Cambridge, MD 21613
410-228-1955
HousingPrograms@chooscambridge.com

Next issue: July 2025

- Housing Department Updates
- Housing in Cambridge
- and more...

Let us know if there is something you would like to read about in the next newsletter.

