WHAT IS LEAD?
Leads is a naturally occurring metal that can be hazardous to human health, especially for children under 6 years of age.

WHY IS LEAD A CONCERN?
- 1 in 20 children in Detroit is lead poisoned
- Children with blood lead levels higher than 10 \( \mu g/dL \)* have lead poisoning
- Lead poisoning can cause learning and speech problems, hyperactivity and nerve damage that cannot easily be reversed and are likely to last a lifetime
- The effects of lead poisoning cannot always be seen
- A healthy diet high in vitamin C & D, calcium, zinc and iron can help reduce lead poisoning
- Children become lead poisoned by eating dust, dirt, and paint that contain lead
- All children under 6 should be tested yearly

WHY IS THERE LEAD IN THE SOIL?
- Lead is found naturally in the soil in low amounts
- Most houses built before 1978 have leaded paint inside and outside
- Soil (mainly in large cities) may have high lead levels because of heavy industry and exhaust from leaded gas (banned in 1986)

For more information visit:
http://www.ecoworksdetroit.org/soilleadproject

PARTNERS

Content Created by:
CLEAR Corps/Detroit
(313) 924-4000
www.clearcorpsdetroit.org
WHERE CAN LEAD BE FOUND IN YOUR YARD?
• Lead may be found in the top 4 inches of soil around your yard
• Soil lead is found in highest amounts near the walls of buildings, especially if they were painted prior to 1978
• Soil lead levels can be higher close to roads

WHERE IS LEAD IN THE GARDEN?
• Lead is not usually found in the fruit of the plant like cucumbers, tomatoes, or strawberries
• Lead is most often found in the root of plants like carrots, beets, turnips, potatoes
• Soil with lead can collect on leafy vegetables (collards, kale, turnip greens) especially those close to the ground

WHEN SHOULD YOU BE WORRIED?
When your yard has a soil testing level of
• Below 100 ppm*: safe range, no action needed
• 100-400 ppm*: level of concern, use Best Gardening Practices
• 400-2,000 ppm*: No gardening before contacting a professional gardening group like Keep Growing Detroit
• Above 2000 ppm*: gardening of any kind is NOT recommended

* ppm = Parts-Per-Million = 1 milligram Pb per kilogram soil (mg/kg) (Concentration of Lead from soil test)

BEST GARDENING PRACTICES
Yearly Upkeep
• Treat soil with lead free compost
• Till soil as deeply as possible (at least 4 in.)
• Plant your garden away from buildings, garages and the street
• Keeping your soil pH above 6.5 will help limit the amount of lead entering plants

Before/During Gardening
• Wear gloves and wash up after gardening
• Keep a layer of mulch around plants to stop soil from splashing onto leaves during rain
• Do not eat or smoke while gardening
• Wet the soil before working in the garden to keep soil dust down
• Keep children under 6 years old out of gardens with soil lead levels above 100 ppm* because they may eat dirt

After Harvesting/Before Eating
• Wash all vegetables with soap and water or a vinegar water mixture (1 part vinegar to 9 parts water)
• Throw away outer leaves of leafy vegetables, and wash inner leaves well
• Peel and wash root vegetables well (if your soil lead levels are higher than 400 ppm* you should not plant root crops before consulting a professional gardening group)

CLEANING UP AFTER GARDENING
• Wash hands after working in the garden
• Remove shoes/boots before coming into your home
• Keep a separate set of clothes for gardening
• Wash gardening clothes separately

GET YOUR SOIL TESTED!
The suggested local source is the professional gardening group
Keep Growing Detroit
www.detroitagriculture.org
Other Resources
Michigan Dept. of Community Health
www.michigan.gov/mdch
University of Massachusetts
Soil and Plant Tissue Testing Laboratory
www.umass.edu/soiltest
Accurate Analytical testing LLC
www.accurate-test.com