



CITY OF BUFFALO

BYRON W. BROWN
MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 6, 2017

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MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN ANNOUNCES CRACKDOWN ON LANDLORDS AND PROPERTY MANAGERS WHO ARE NOT COMPLYING WITH THE CITY OF BUFFALO'S NEW REGULATIONS TO REDUCE TENANT EXPOSURE TO LEAD-BASED PAINT

The regulations, aimed at reducing lead exposure for children and pregnant women, went into effect on January 1, 2017, include new licensing and lead hazard training requirements

Buffalo, N.Y. – Mayor Byron W. Brown today announced the Department of Permit and Inspections Services (DPIS) is cracking down on landlords and property managers who are not complying with the City of Buffalo's new series of regulations designed to reduce tenant exposure to lead-based paint.

"While both the number of lead poisoning cases, and the severity of the exposure, have been reduced in recent years, the problem still persists, because the majority of Buffalo's housing stock was built decades before lead-based paint was banned in 1978," Mayor Brown said. "These new regulations will give landlords and properties managers the tools they need to more effectively reduce exposure to lead poisoning, while providing tenants the information they need to make knowledgeable decisions about their housing."

The City of Buffalo requires that any landlord who owns more than three properties to become a licensed property manager. In addition to listing, the properties the individual manages, the license also requires that the manager take an approved EPA/HUD Renovation, Rehabilitation and Painting (RRP) course.

The DPIS, which oversees the City's Rental Registration Program, has identified over 800 landlords who are not in compliance with the new property manager legislation.

The City mailed out information regarding the regulation changes in January with their annual rental registration invoice, allowing registrants six months to come into compliance. The City of Buffalo's Rental Registry includes more than 22,000 landlords who own non-owner occupied, single and double residences, as well as 832 property managers who oversee three or more properties.

"Based on our compliance sample, we are mailing out the required forms to all landlords and property managers who fit the criteria. Failure to comply can also result in a court action being initiated and if found guilty, subject to a fine up to \$1500 and/or fifteen days in jail," said Commissioner of Permits and Inspections, James W. Comerford.

The commissioner also noted the ordinance change requires that landlords who are cited for lead-based paint hazards must take an approved HUD/EPA RRP certification course.

“Our inspectors are writing tickets for chipping and peeling paint on either the interior or exterior. The fine for the ticket is \$105,” Comerford added.

Changes to the City of Buffalo ordinances also require that landlords must now notify their tenants that lead hazards may be present in their units if the property was built prior to 1978. Landlords and tenants are now required to sign a Lead Paint Notice. The landlord is then required to complete Landlord Attestation that they have provided a copy of the Lead Paint Notice to their tenants.

Failure to do so may result in the revocation of their Rental Registration certificate which means that the home or apartment cannot be occupied. Failure to comply can also result in a court action being initiated and if found guilty, subject to a fine up to \$1500 and/or fifteen days in jail.

“Lead poisoning is preventable if you are aware of potential sources and have information and guidance on how to keep your family safe. We will continue to work together, as a community, to “Legislate, Collaborate, Educate and Remediate,” Mayor Brown said.

All of these legislative changes, proposed by Mayor Brown in May 2016, were approved unanimously by the Buffalo Common Council. The new ordinances are part of a multi-pronged initiative to educate homeowners, renters, and landlords about lead-based paint hazards. The City has distributed more than 250,000 lead information flyers, in eight languages, via City of Buffalo Community Centers, Citizens Services, Youth Services, the Office of New Americans, Buffalo Public Schools, and dozens of community organizations.

The City is also continuing to work with the Erie County Department of Health, the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, and the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative.

For more information contact, the Department of Permit and Inspection Services at 851-4949. Detailed information and required forms can be found on the City’s website: www.city-buffalo.com, on the DPIS page, under the Rental Registration tab.

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