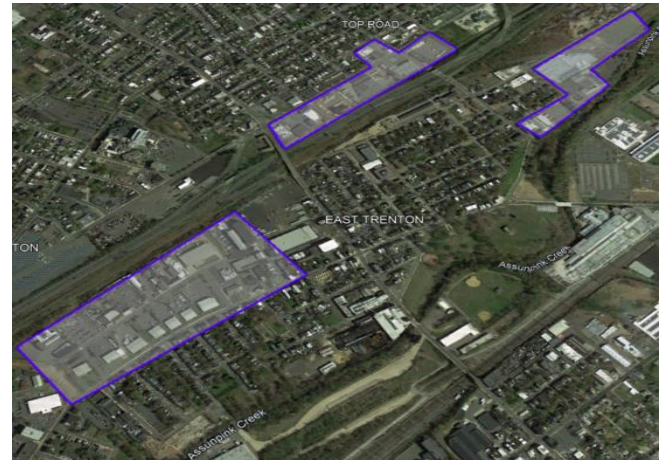




School Soil Sampling Results

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is addressing lead contamination at Ulysses S. Grant Intermediate School in the East Trenton neighborhood. EPA is working with the school district to develop a plan that would protect the school community from lead contamination in the soil. Ulysses S. Grant Intermediate School officials have closed play areas, and EPA and the school are installing fencing around the impacted areas on the school property to restrict access to the soil as a first step. EPA is also working with the school district to develop a plan that would allow children to return to the play areas that contain soil.

In December 2023 EPA coordinated with the Trenton Public School District to collect and analyze soil samples from two schools. EPA tested soil samples from Ulysses S. Grant Intermediate School and found lead levels in soil that require immediate action. EPA found that the soil samples from Darlene C. McKnight Elementary School had levels of lead that do not require immediate action. EPA is coordinating with the superintendent of schools to ensure that parents are informed, and all appropriate actions are taken to protect students and faculty at the schools. EPA's work is continuing, and it will keep the public informed as it learns more.



Areas where historic potteries operated around East Trenton.



Stay Informed

EPA staff will be available after school at Ulysses S. Grant Intermediate School to speak with parents and answer questions on **Friday, February 9, 2024, from 4 to 6 p.m.**

EPA is hosting a community meeting for parents and community members on **February 21, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.** at Ulysses S. Grant Intermediate School. EPA will present on the work that has been done and next steps. Community members will also have time to ask questions.

East Trenton Lead Investigation

EPA began an investigation in 2018 into a former solder manufacturer in East Trenton and found elevated lead levels on residential properties near the facility. However, EPA determined that the lead contamination was not caused by the solder manufacturer. EPA began investigating the pottery industry in 2020 as the potential source of the elevated lead levels, which required extensive research and a field investigation to determine whether the potteries caused lead contamination in the soil. EPA began sampling residential properties and parks within the Top Road and East Trenton neighborhoods in 2023.

The pottery industry was prominent in Trenton with a major hub in the East Trenton and Top Road neighborhoods. The industry grew from the 1850s until the 1920s when it began to shrink considerably during the Great Depression. Potteries in Trenton manufactured products, including tableware, art ceramics, sanitary ware, and electrical porcelain. The industry flourished due to its central location between New York and Philadelphia, allowing for easy export of finished goods and import of central New Jersey clays and eastern Pennsylvania coals along the canals and railroads that went through the city. Lead was commonly used in glazes which were subject to very high temperatures in the firing kilns. Lead may have been released in the exhaust from the kilns and into the air to then settle into the soil downwind from the kilns. Soil containing ceramic pieces that was likely used as fill material during development of the residential neighborhoods in East Trenton may also be adding to the lead contamination.



Lead is a natural metal that can be found in air, water, and soil. When lead is released into the air, it may be transported long distances before it lands and stays on the ground. Lead can affect almost every organ and system in your body, particularly the nervous system. For more information about lead, visit: www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfags/tfacts13.pdf

Simple Steps to Reduce Your Lead Exposure

The following steps are recommended to reduce your potential exposure to lead contamination that may be present in urban soil.

- Remove shoes at the door before entering your home to prevent tracking in any dirt that may be on your shoes. Clean the bottom of your shoes with a wet wipe or paper towel.
- Wash your hands and face after coming in from outside and before eating, drinking, or smoking. Wash children's toys and items they place in their mouths.
- Avoid digging into or disturbing soil if possible, and wash hands and face afterwards.

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The National Lead Information Center provides information about lead, lead hazards, and their prevention. You can call and speak with a specialist Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Eastern time (except federal holidays) at 1 (800) 424-LEAD [5323].

For more information about getting your child tested for lead in NJ,
visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/health/childhoodlead/testing.shtml>

For general information or questions about EPA's Superfund program, please contact [Jim Haklar](mailto:Haklar.james@epa.gov) of EPA's Regional Public Liaison Office, at Haklar.james@epa.gov, or (732) 906-6817 or toll free at (888) 283-7626.