

Panhandle

Public Health District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For more information, contact Kendra Lauruhn, Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Manager, at 308-633-2866 or lauruhn@pphd.ne.gov

Panhandle Public Health District to Offer Free Lead Screening and Education in Crawford

Panhandle Public Health District (PPHD) will be in Crawford on **Friday, August 21, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Crawford Community Center** to provide education about lead exposure and free lead screening. Screening involves a simple finger-stick blood sample and is available to community members at no cost.

The event will provide community members with an opportunity to learn more about risks of exposure to lead, ask questions of public health professionals, and have a blood lead test completed if they choose. There is no cost for the testing, and results are available within minutes. Lead exposure can happen to anyone and may occur through sources such as lead-based paint and dust, contaminated soil or water, and certain occupations or hobbies. Young children are particularly vulnerable because their developing brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to the effects of lead.

“Testing is an important tool for identifying lead exposure, especially because people may have been exposed without realizing it,” said Kendra Lauruhn with PPHD. “We want to make it easy for community members to get information, ask questions and learn what they can do to protect themselves and their families.”

Lead Exposure and Children

Children exposed to lead may have no obvious symptoms, even when lead is affecting their health. Even low levels of lead in the blood have been associated with problems with learning, attention, development and academic achievement. The effects of lead exposure can be permanent.

Possible signs of lead poisoning in children can include:

- Irritability or changes in behavior
- Fatigue or decreased energy
- Difficulty concentrating
- Developmental delays
- Learning difficulties
- Loss of appetite



- Stomach pain or constipation
- Headaches
- In more serious cases, neurological problems such as seizures

Because symptoms may be absent or difficult to recognize, a blood lead test is the best way to determine whether a person has been exposed to lead. No safe blood lead level has been identified for children.

Lead Exposure and Adults

Adults can also experience health effects from lead exposure. Some adults may have no symptoms, while others may experience:

- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Stomach pain, nausea or constipation
- Joint or muscle pain
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- Hearing problems
- Increased blood pressure

Long-term lead exposure can affect the brain and nervous system, kidneys, cardiovascular system and reproductive health.

“Lead exposure is preventable, and knowing your blood lead level can be an important first step,” PPHD said. “This event is an opportunity for Crawford-area residents to get information and testing in a convenient, community-based setting.”

Community members are encouraged to stop by the Crawford Community Center on August 21 between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. to learn more about lead exposure and prevention and to receive a free finger-poke blood lead test if they choose.

Event Details

What: Finger-Poke Lead Testing

When: Friday, August 21, 2026 | 4:00–6:00 p.m.

Where: Crawford Community Center, Crawford, Nebraska

Cost: Free

Results: Available within minutes

For more information about lead exposure, testing or prevention, contact Kendra Lauruhn, Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Manager at 308-633-2866 or klauruhn@pphd.ne.gov

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.