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FEDERAL GRANT MONEY STILL AVAILABLE TO HOMEOWNERS WHO NEED TO MAKE THEIR HOMES SAFER FROM LEAD

San Diego Housing Commission's \$7 million dollar grant helps families stay healthy

San Diego, CA—As the lead removal work begins on Jim Clark's City Heights home, it serves as a reminder to homeowners with children under the age of 6 that they can still apply for federal funds through the San Diego Housing Commission's Lead Safe Program.

"I don't know what I would have done if it weren't for the San Diego Housing Commission," said Clark who is retired and lives in the home with his wife, daughter and grandchild.

The Clark family was the first to apply and receive a \$10 thousand dollar lead removal grant, which is paying for the stripping of lead paint inside and outside their home. The Clark's have lived in the house for 37 years, and the lead removal work is expected to be finished next month.

"Like the Clark family, homeowners on fixed and low incomes, with children under the age of 6, only need to pick-up the phone and call the San Diego Housing Commission to find out if they qualify for our Lead Safe Program," said Frank Ballow, Construction Officer for the San Diego Housing Commission.

This year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded the San Diego Housing Commission a \$7 million grant for its Lead Safe Program, which will help more than 500 households over the next 3 years.

Homes built before 1978 have lead based paint which can become a serious health hazard as the paint begins to chip, crack, peel, or turns into lead dust that absorbs into floors, walls and windowsills.

The lead poisoning can cause serious health problems, and it is the number one preventable environmental problem facing children today. That is the reason the program targets families with children under the age of 6 because their hand-to-mouth activities increase exposure to the lead.

Residents and landlords can apply for the Lead Safe Program by calling the San Diego Housing Commission at 619-578-7521 or visiting the website at www.sdhc.org, click "Housing Assistance Programs."

Since 2002, HUD has awarded \$17 million in federal grants to the City of San Diego for its Lead Safe Program.