



NEWS RELEASE issued by THEC

2021 Children's Lead Levels Remain Similar to Last Year

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Trail, BC - The results from the 2021 children's blood lead testing clinic show that the average blood lead level for children aged six to 36 months in Trail and Rivervale is 2.5 micrograms per decilitre. This is similar to the previous three years with an average of 2.3 in 2020, 2.6 in 2019 and 2.9 in 2018. Participation rates for this voluntary program were lower than in previous years due to increased COVID-19 activity as well as back to school colds that fell during the scheduled children's blood lead clinic testing dates.

The Trail Area Health & Environment Committee (THEC) continues its efforts to further reduce children's blood lead levels. We strive for continuous improvement working to deliver programs aimed to reduce exposure to lead in the community, and specifically exposure to children.

The THEC Air Quality Program, managed by Teck Trail Operations, continues to reduce lead in the environment through the comprehensive Fugitive Dust Reduction Program. The 2021 year-to-date average for lead in community air is 0.07 micrograms per cubic metre.

Quotes:

Mayor Lisa Pasin, City of Trail, Chair of the Trail Area Health & Environment Committee says, "I appreciate everyone who made an effort to attend this year's voluntary children's blood lead testing clinic despite the challenges families are facing with the pandemic. Average blood lead levels continue to remain below 3 micrograms per decilitre. In an effort to further reduce children's potential exposure to lead and strive toward lower blood lead levels in the future we will continue to review and evolve our programs."

Dr. Karin Goodison, Medical Health Officer, Interior Health says, "In recent years we have seen a downward trend, with some possible plateauing of this in 2021. We do continue to see some children with higher levels than we would like and we must continue the collaborative work required to further reduce exposure of children living in the Trail area to environmental lead sources."

Dan Bouillon, Manager, Environment at Teck Trail Operations says, "In 2021 we have focused on embedding operational controls on fugitive emissions across our site and our year-to-date ambient air quality results are on track to match the lowest annual levels ever recorded. Teck Trail Operations is

committed to continuous improvement through the comprehensive Fugitive Dust Reduction Program, which has realized an 80% reduction in ambient air levels since 2012.”

About the Trail Area Health & Environment Program

The Trail Area Health & Environment Program (THEP) has five main areas of activity: Family Health, Home & Garden, Air Quality, Parks, and Property Development. THEP promotes a healthy environment through a comprehensive integrated program that successfully improves air quality and children’s blood lead levels, and promotes the health of the community. The Air Quality Program reduces smelter emissions and makes the largest contribution to achieving health and environment goals. All our activities work together to get the best results – lower exposure, lower health risks, and a healthier environment.

The Trail Area Health & Environment Committee (THEC), a subcommittee of Trail City Council, oversees the program. THEC includes collaboration with the local community, Teck, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, and Interior Health. Over the past three decades children’s blood lead levels in Trail have reduced and air quality has improved. For more information please visit thep.ca.

For more information, contact:

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