



NEWS RELEASE issued by THEC

2022 Children's Lead Levels Continue to Decline

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Trail, BC - The results from the 2022 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 2.3 micrograms per decilitre. The downward trend continues with the average remaining below 3 since 2018 (2.5 in 2021, 2.3 in 2020, 2.6 in 2019 and 2.9 in 2018). While the participation rate at voluntary clinics declined during the pandemic, the program is pleased to report participation has improved since last year.

The Trail Area Health & Environment Program (THEP) continues its efforts to further reduce children's blood lead levels. A recently approved [strategic plan](#) outlines ongoing activities to further reduce lead exposure in the community including from our air, soil, and built environments, as well as by adopting healthy practices such as handwashing before eating, ensuring an iron rich diet and keeping floors dust-free (to name a few). THEP also connects with other groups in the community to ensure messaging is shared and supports get to where they are needed.

THEP's Air Quality Program, managed by Teck Trail Operations, is proud to share that the 2022 year-to-date average for lead in community air is the lowest ever at 0.06 micrograms per cubic metre. In the absence of Canadian air quality objectives or standards for lead, in 2022 the program began comparing our community air results to the US Environmental Protection Agency standard. Teck is pleased to report that lead in community air has consistently met this standard for the last two years.

Quotes:

Mayor Colleen Jones, City of Trail, and Chair of the Trail Area Health & Environment Committee, says, "I am pleased that average blood lead levels in children continue to remain below 3 micrograms per decilitre. THEP's [strategic plan](#) will guide us in our efforts to further reduce children's exposure to lead and strive toward lower blood lead levels in the future. The City is proud to be a leader and a partner in these programs."

Dr. Karin Goodison, Medical Health Officer, Interior Health says, "I am pleased to note that the 2022 blood lead clinics reported some of the lowest blood lead values to date, with no child having a blood lead above 10 micrograms per decilitre. We will continue to work collaboratively towards further reductions in environmental exposure to lead."

Dan Bouillon, Manager, Environment at Teck Trail Operations says, “I’m pleased to report that we continue to see improvements as a result of our ongoing focus on the Fugitive Dust Reduction Program and our year-to-date ambient air quality results are on track to be the lowest annual levels ever recorded. Teck Trail Operations is a proud partner in the Trail Area Health & Environment Program, and we are committed to the collaborative work in support of community health and well being.”

About the Trail Area Health & Environment Program

The Trail Area Health & Environment Program (THEP) supports the community of Trail and surrounding areas to live, work and play in an area that has been influenced by smelter air emissions for over 125 years. THEP focuses on air, soil, health, built environments (e.g. homes, daycares, fences, sheds, civic buildings, etc.), community connection and understanding the interrelationships between focus areas. THEP aims to be an accessible entry point for the community to learn, ask questions and find support. Strong community connections and a culture of sharing and learning helps to ensure programming and resources have maximum impact. THEP is implemented by the following partners: City of Trail, Interior Health, Teck Trail Operations and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.

The Trail Area Health & Environment Committee (THEC) is a select committee of Trail City Council and includes local government, the community, provincial and local partners. It was established in 2001 by the Trail Lead Task Force which had conducted research on the issues for 10 years prior. Its mandate is to be a transparent platform for multistakeholder dialogue, collective decision-making and community engagement specific to THEP. A full description is available [online](#).

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:

Interior Health media relations
1-844-469-7077 or media@interiorhealth.ca

Jayne Garry, Community Relations Leader – Public Relations, Teck Trail Operations
(250) 364-4878 or jayne.garry@teck.com

Michelle Laurie, THEC Lead Facilitator
michelle@thep.ca