

MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Global Conversation on Reducing Lead Exposure Comes to Trail

May 12, 2025 – Trail, B.C.

What do communities living near operating lead smelters have in common—and what can they learn from one another? These questions have brought together professionals from Trail, B.C., Port Pirie, Australia, and Hoboken, Belgium in an international **Community of Practice (CoP)** focused on reducing lead exposure and improving public health.

Each community brings a unique approach to this complex challenge. From regulatory differences to local health initiatives, strategies vary, but the shared goal remains clear: reduce lead in airborne dust and lower children's blood lead levels.

In Trail, efforts include operational improvements at **Teck Trail Operations**, targeted in-home visits, and a comprehensive public health program delivered through the **Trail Area Health & Environment Program (THEP)**.

The international collaboration began in June 2023 between Trail and Port Pirie. Belgium joined in summer of 2024. Since then, participants from all three countries have met virtually to exchange insights, challenges, and successful strategies.

From **May 7–9, 2025**, THEP and Teck welcomed **Liene Dhooghe** from **Umicore** in Hoboken, Belgium. Liene shared her community's experience with the **Trail Area Health & Environment Committee**, met with local program staff, and visited Teck's smelter to learn about its ongoing improvements.

"It is so wonderful to see active cooperation between all different parties here in Trail and the commitment of everyone to work together. I can see in Trail that the investment in the relationships is worth it, as the delivery of the program is very impressive. I am very grateful to be able to share experiences and knowledge with both THEP and Teck, since it gives me the chance to learn in different areas of this topic. I look forward to sharing this with my colleagues in Belgium."


— **Liene Dhooghe**, Umicore, Belgium

During her visit, Liene noted several of Trail's strengths, including its partnership-based approach, a delivery team comprised of **Interior Health** and **AtkinsRéalis**, a **City-appointed facilitator**, and substantial improvements at the smelter to minimize lead in dust getting into the community.

Mayor Colleen Jones expressed her pride in the recognition Trail is receiving:

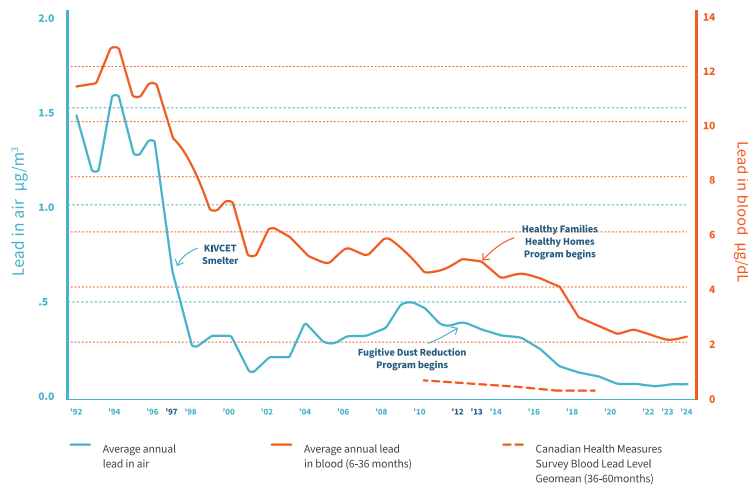


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“It’s wonderful to see the hard work being done in Trail recognized internationally. THEP has long been a leader in our collaborative approach to reducing lead exposure, and we remain committed to innovation and sharing what we’ve learned.”

Annual average for lead in community air and children’s blood
(1992-2024, Trail, B.C.)




Caption: Air quality and children’s blood lead levels in Trail have steadily improved (1992–2024).

Upcoming Meeting

The next **Trail Area Health & Environment Committee** meeting will be held:

 **June 19, 2025**

 **7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

 Location details at thep.ca; Everyone is welcome.

For more information about the Trail Area Health & Environment Program, visit:

 www.thep.ca

Photos attached.