

## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **June is Healthy Homes Month**

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) is celebrating Healthy Homes Month this June by encouraging you to take some time to check your home for health hazards. Your home is essential to you and your family's overall health.

According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), housing quality can have a big impact on health, especially for children and people who are elderly or disabled. Children are more vulnerable to home hazards due to their small size. They take in more food, water, and air relative to their body size, so they are more likely to be harmed by chemicals and toxins. They also may spend more time on the floor, closer to potential health hazards, like lead dust or chemicals on floors.

There are many ways to make sure your home is a healthy place to live. Here are a few things to look for.

#### **Healthy Homes Checklist**

- ✓ Look around plumbing, bathrooms, basements, or other areas for any signs of mold or dampness that could lead to mold. Get rid of any mold you find with bleach or other mold treatments.
- ✓ If your home was built before 1978, check for lead-based paint, asbestos, and other harmful hazards. EPA.gov has resources to find testing or a certified assessor.
- ✓ Check for other sources of lead. The most common sources of lead besides paint are lead pipes, faucets, and fixtures. Lead dust may also be brought into the home on work clothes, shoes, and hair.
- ✓ Make sure you have a good working ventilation system and working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- ✓ Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors monthly and replace the batteries annually.
- ✓ Inspect your home heating system by checking outside vents for correct sealing, and have any chimneys inspected and cleaned.
- ✓ Inspect wood-burning stoves twice monthly and inspect water heaters once a year. Repair or replace them as needed.
- ✓ Test your home for radon every two years or use an air quality monitor that includes radon levels. Radon causes lung cancer over time, so if your radon level is high, contact a radon mitigator to lower it.

Reducing exposure to health and safety hazards in the home can significantly improve your health in the long run. When you have clean air and water and remove any harmful substances, you lower your risk of health problems, give children a better chance at a healthy life, and improve your overall quality of life.

For more information call SWNPHD at 308-345-4223, one number, three locations. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. The website [swhealth.ne.gov](http://swhealth.ne.gov) contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote wellness, and protect health. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

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