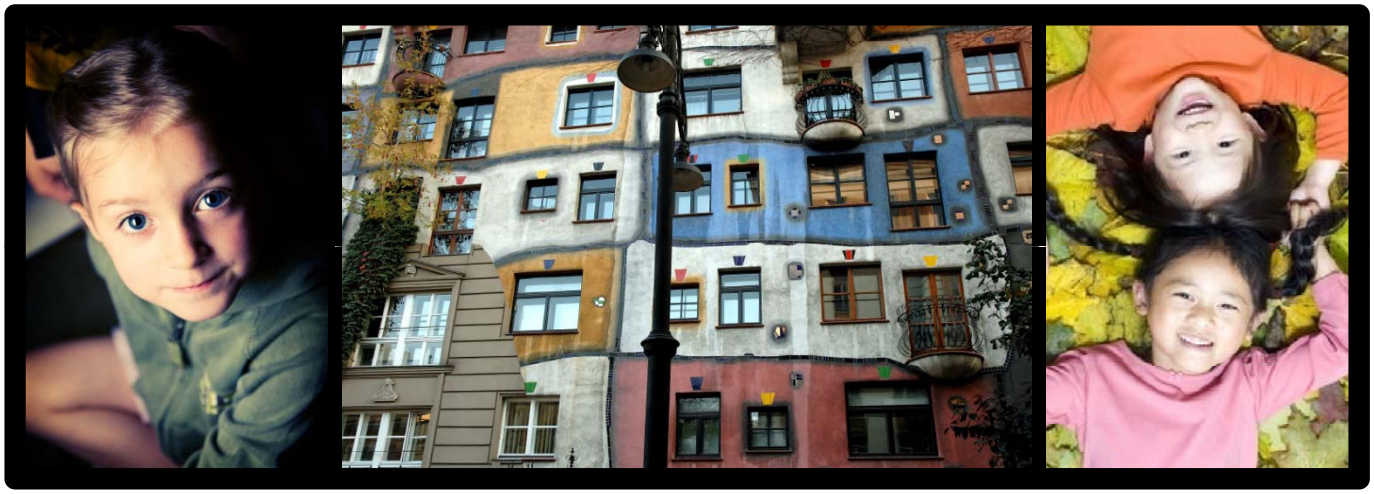
An Integrated Approach to Healthy Homes

University of Rochester Medical Center Environmental Health Sciences Center
Supported by Monroe County Department of Public Health

Today's Goal

- Simple steps to a healthier home
- Strategies for addressing specific hazards
- Local and national resources

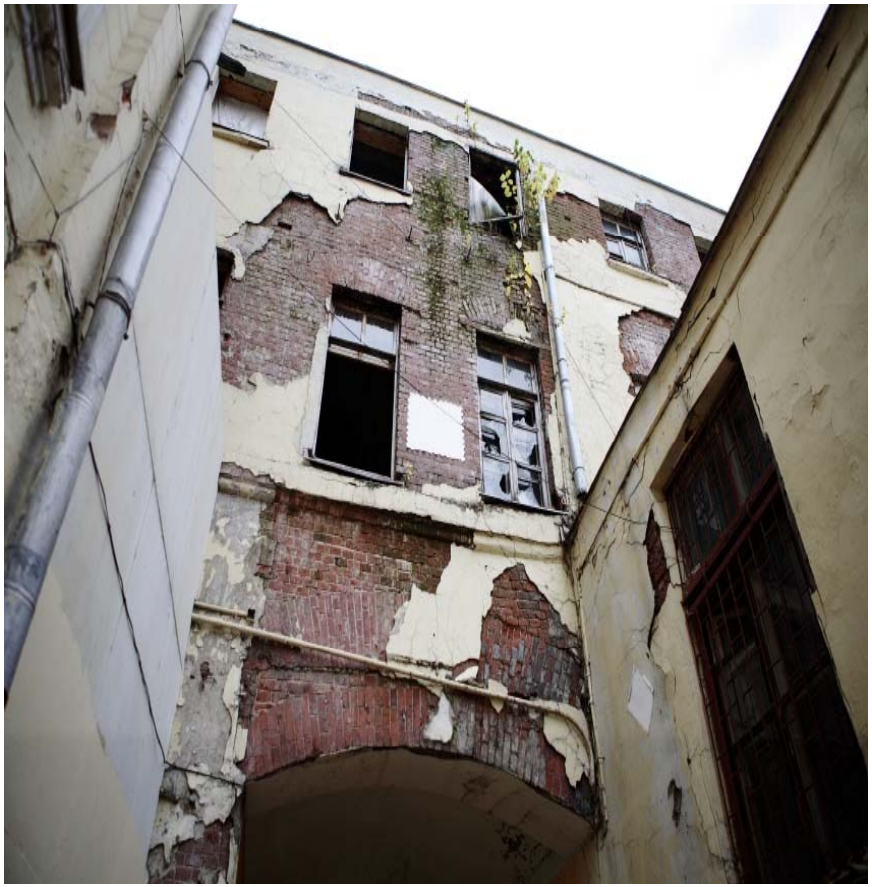
Why Focus on Home Environmental Health?



- Prevent illnesses
- Improve physical and mental health
- Save money

Did you know…

2 in 3 U.S. families live in a home with at least one major health risk



Moving Away From Direct Relationships…

Specific hazard leads to condition

→

…to a Holistic Approach

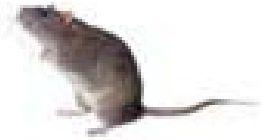
Why is the hazard there?

What other hazards could this cause?

Holistic Approach, cont'd

Moisture / Water Intrusion

Structural Damage



Pests: Asthma, Diseases

Peeling paint: Lead Poisoning

Appliance damage: Fire

Home Damage: Injuries

Holistic Approach, cont'd

Pests

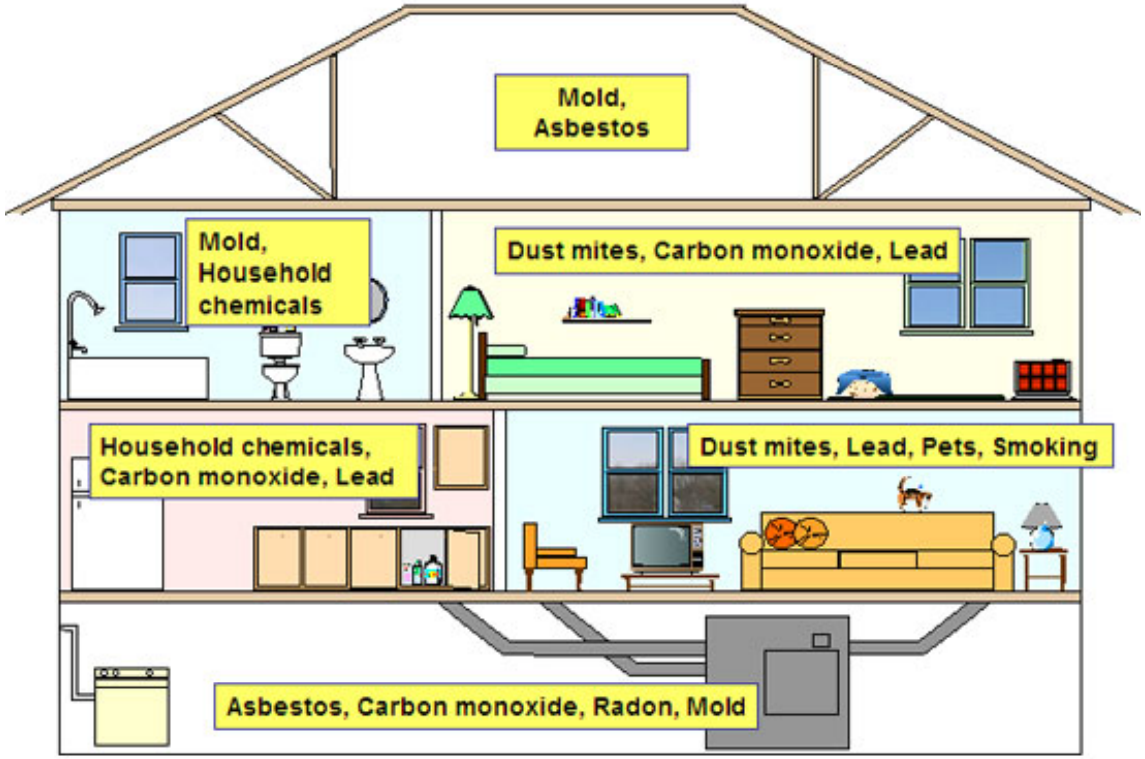
Pesticides

Asthma

Holistic Approach, cont'd

Pesticide

Move from Individual Hazards to a Holistic Approach



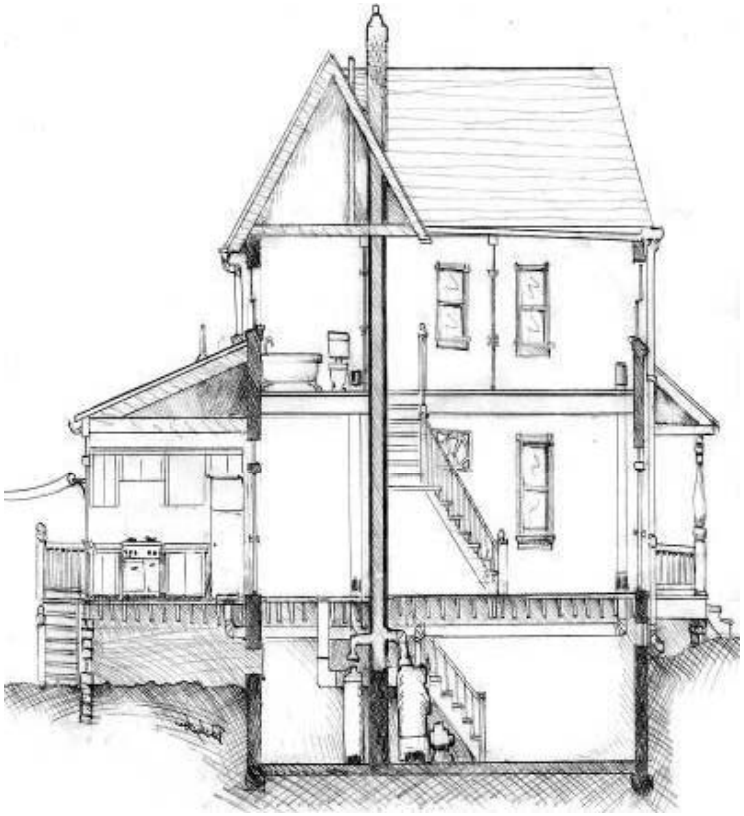
People

Structure

Health Hazards

Seven Principles of Healthy Homes

- Keep it:
  - Dry
  - Ventilated
  - Safe
  - Well maintained
  - Clean
  - Contaminant-free
  - Pest-free

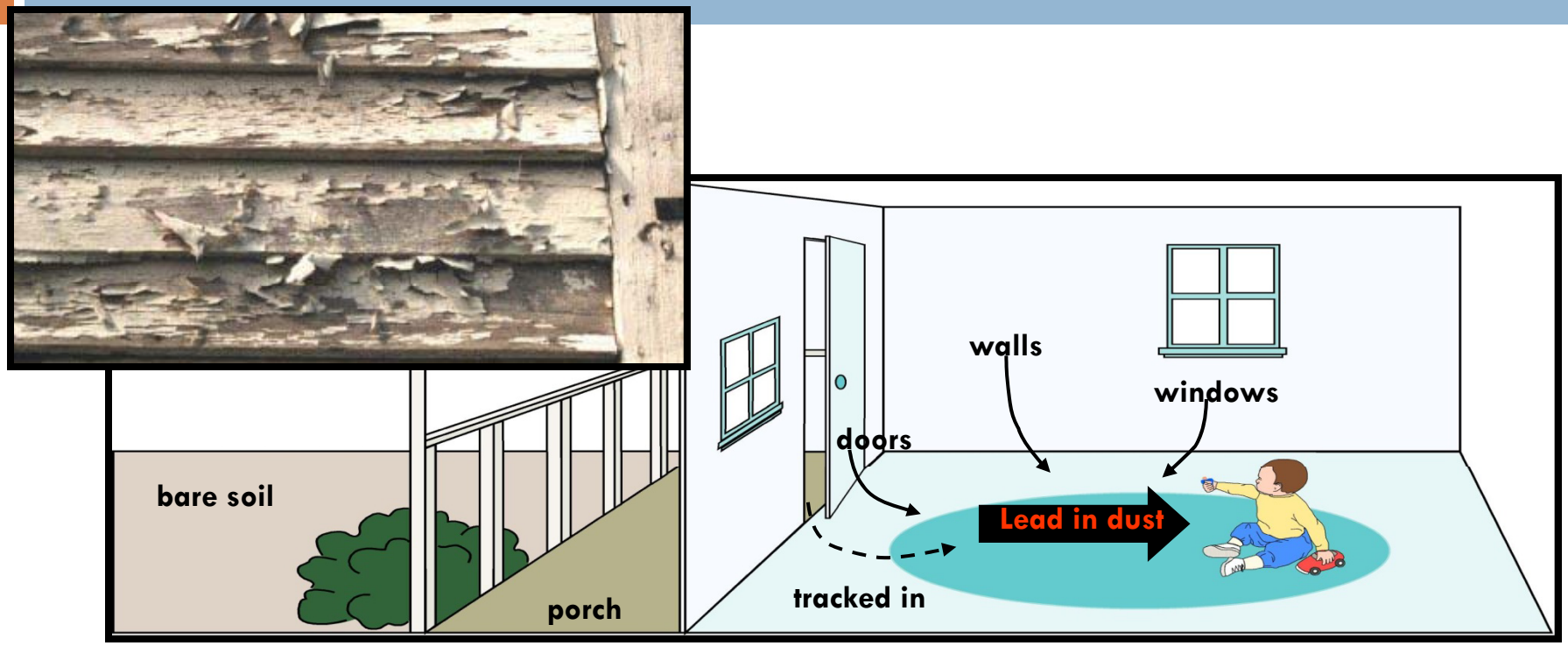


- Even the principles are connected to each other!

Clean: Healthy Housekeeping

- Work wet
- Mop with two buckets
- Practice chemical safety
- Reduce Clutter
- Clean often

Contaminant-free: Lead



- Neurotoxin
- Dust and paint chips
- Other sources (soil, products, water, home remedies, etc.)

Contaminant-free: Lead

- GET TESTED!
- Know the law:
  - Rochester's Lead Law
  - EPA Renovation, Repair and Painting rule
- Use Lead Safe Work Practices when doing own work
- Cover bare soil
- Wash hands and toys
- Healthy housekeeping

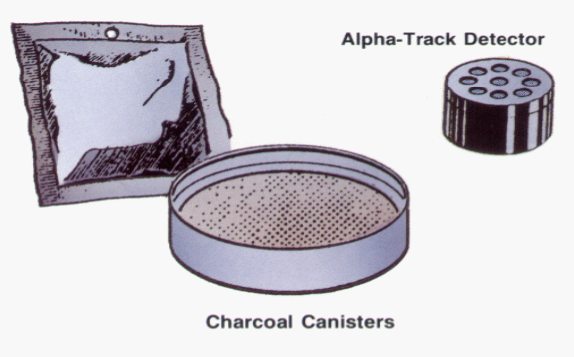
Contaminant-free: Indoor Air

- Ventilate
- Professional inspections/repairs
- Healthy housekeeping
- Change furnace filter regularly

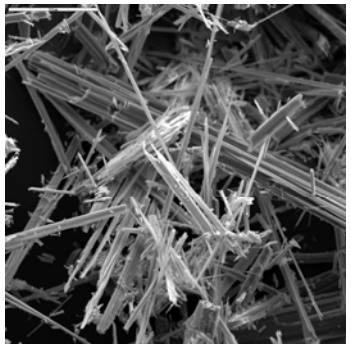
Contaminant-free: Indoor Air

- Carbon monoxide

- Radon



- Asbestos



Contaminant-free: Asthma

- Long-term condition
- Over 4500 children in Rochester affected
- #1cause of missed school and work
- Many triggers can be controlled
- Common triggers:
  - Smoke
  - Mold
  - Pests
  - Pets
  - Fragrances
  - Dust mites

Contaminant-free: Asthma Triggers

- Tobacco smoke

- Mold

- Dust mites

Pest-free: Safe Pest Management

- Insects, rodents, etc.
- Attracted to food, water, shelter
- Trigger asthma, spread disease, destroy belongings, etc.

Pest-free: Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

- EEP (EEK)!
  - Exclude
  - Eliminate
  - Prevent (keep away)
- Practice Healthy Housekeeping
- Contact professionals for help
- Use poison as a last resort

Pest-free: Exclude

- Inspect foundations and walls inside and outside
- Fix cracks, fill holes
  - Caulk
  - Expanding foam
  - Copper mesh or steel wool
- Know what to look for! Mice can fit through a hole the size of a:

Pest-free: Eliminate

- Rodents: snap or live traps
- Roaches: boric acid or bait stations
- Ants: bait stations

- Place where pests travel
- Keep away from kids and pets

Pest-free: Prevent

- Take away food, water and shelter
  - Fix leaks
  - Put food away in containers
  - Take trash out regularly
  - Clean up spills right away
  - Reduce clutter

Pest-free: Prevent – Bed Bugs

- Not a health *hazard*
- "Hitchhikers"
  - Furniture
  - Bags
  - Suitcases
  - Boxes
- Contact a professional to eliminate from home (IPM works)

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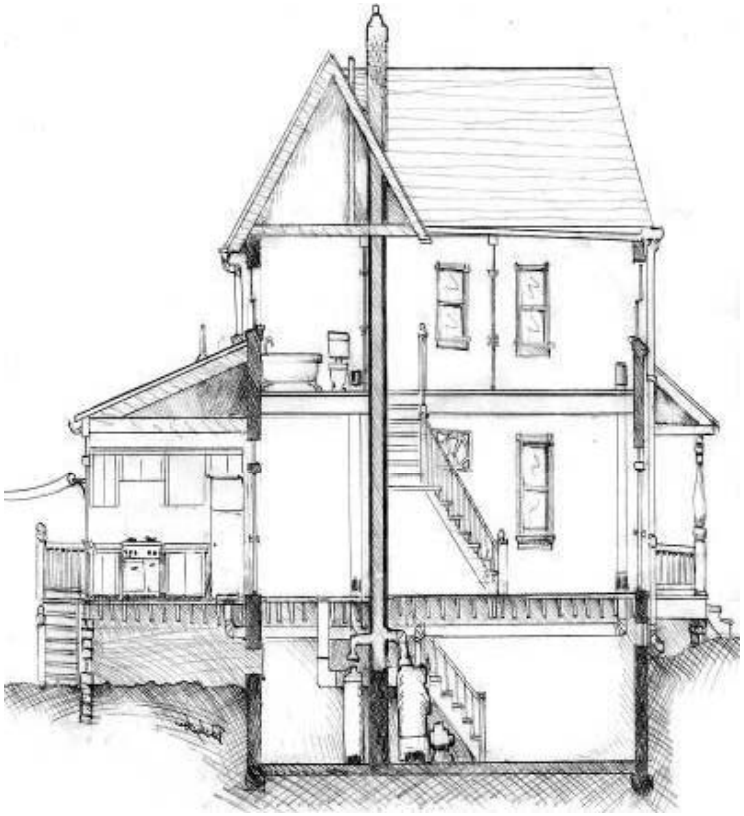

Local Resources

- 2-1-1
- Rochester Regional Children's Environmental Health Center (RRCEHC)
- Regional Community Asthma Network (RCAN)
- 'Healthy Homes' website
- Monroe County Department of Public Health
- New York State Department of Health
  - www.health.state.ny.us

National Resources

- Environmental Protection Agency
  - www.epa.gov
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
  - www.hud.gov
- National Center for Healthy Housing
  - www.nchh.org
- National Environmental Health Association
  - www.neha.org

What's the Hazard?

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The Seven Principles of Healthy Housing, any many of the images in this presentation, are from the National Center of Healthy Housing.
http://www.nchh.org