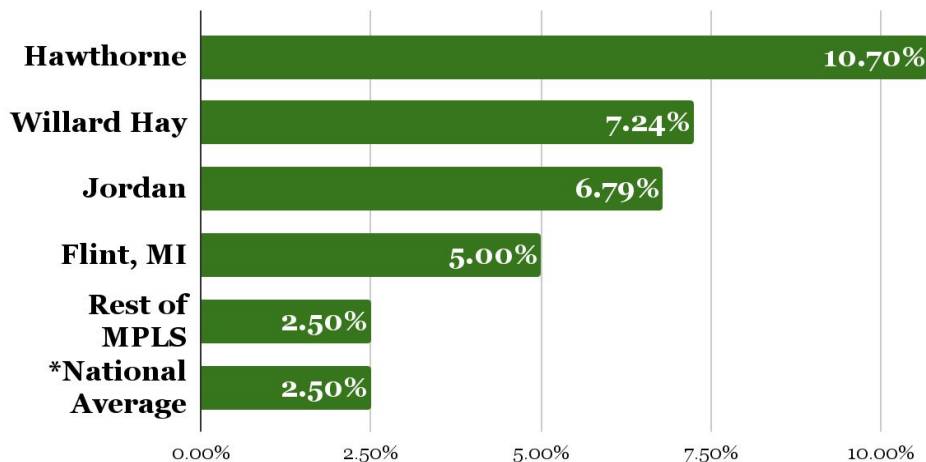


# FLINT VS. NORTH MPLS

Did you know that North Minneapolis has a bigger problem with lead than Flint, MI? In some areas of No. Mpls, **twice** as many children have dangerous levels of lead in their blood as kids in Flint, MI.

**1 in 20** kids in Flint have tested for elevated blood lead levels. In Hawthorne, the number is **1 in 10**.

Percentages of children with dangerous levels of lead in the bloodstream



\*information from Reuters News Service

# THE PROBLEM

Lead hurts everyone, but most especially it impedes the neurological development in young children ages 0-5. Exposure to lead at this age can have **permanent** and **irreversible** impacts, that include:

- **brain damage**
- nervous system **impairment**
- **learning disabilities**-- including memory impairment, pattern recognition
- **difficulties**, and an incapacity to focus (ADHD and ADD)
- **emotional instability** and **behavior problems**
- **lowered IQ**
- **hearing and speech problems**

# EXPOSURE

Children come in contact with lead either inside their homes, or right outside their house. National statistics show that **90%** of lead exposure occurs in & around the home. They are either breathing **lead dust**, or **touching lead** & then placing their fingers in their mouths. Lead is a soft & sweet material, which unfortunately makes it appealing for a child to eat.



Other sources include:

## **Painted surfaces inside and outside older houses.**

Until the 1970's, lead was added to paint to strengthen it. Houses built before WWII are the worst culprits.

## **Bare dirt.**

Before the 70's, lead was added to gasoline to improve engine performance. Car and truck exhaust floated lead into the air then into the soil. Proximity to highways increases the problem, & North Minneapolis is ringed by interstates.



## Plumbing fixtures.

The city has good water. Minneapolis' water treatment plant is state of the art. But when that water flows through corroded pipes and old fixtures, it can pick up lead and other toxins, especially a problem in the schools.

## The air.

Northern Metals and other industries located along the river in N. Mpls pump significant amounts of heavy metals into the air. North Mpls has the highest rate of asthma hospitalizations in the State, most



likely because of these pollutants. Although it's doubtful these industries are the main source of

lead in children's bloodstream, they contribute to the problem.

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# REMEDIES

- Removing and painting over loose and cracked paint. Even simply keeping painted surfaces clean by vacuuming and wiping with wet paper towels can reduce exposure.
- Taping over cracked paint with packing tape is another quick remedy.
- Covering bare soil with plants or wood chips. This is especially important close to the buildings, where old chipping paint can end up in the soil.
- Running air filters inside the home may create some relief.

- Removing shoes before entering the house.
- Wet-mopping floors and wet-wiping window components
- Regularly wash children's toys and hands. Prevent children from playing in bare soil. Keep their toys out of the dirt. Empty lots can be particularly hazardous given that old buildings were often demolished on these sites.

- Sometimes home products contain lead, especially imported products like pots, mascara, toys, jewelry, and even candies and folk medicine. Investigate what you have in your home.



- There are treatments that can help with lead exposure, including diets that are rich in calcium, iron, and vitamin C. Your doctor can help find the best course of treatment.



- Schools should be testing for lead in their water. The School Board needs a plan for replacing old plumbing fixtures and old water pipes.
  - Northern Metals is moving the worst parts of their operation to another city. Re-zoning measures may eventually move other industries out too.
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# RESOURCES



If you think you have lead in your home, please contact Carbon Zero Home:  
[www.carbonzerohome.org](http://www.carbonzerohome.org)  
email us at:  
[sean@carbonzerohome.org](mailto:sean@carbonzerohome.org)

Both the City of Minneapolis and the State of Minnesota have programs to help families protect children from lead exposure. You can contact the City Health Dept at 612-673-2301, if you are interested in learning about these programs.

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