Housing

Regulatory Revisions, Q & A
Equity Initiatives

Massachusetts Environmental Health Association
Annual Seminar, May 24, 2023

Paul Halfmann, MPH, RS
Manager
Halfmann Public Health Consulting, LLC
Environmental Justice

• Massachusetts public health officials award $100,000 to address environmental and climate justice, 2/2/23
  – $100,000 in funding to four organizations working to improve public health in Environmental Justice communities
  – Promote health equity by reducing harmful levels of exposure to environmental hazards in communities disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
Environmental Justice

- $25,000 each to 4 communities between January and June 2023

  - Pilot program to implement interventions aimed at reducing environmental exposures and potential health impacts
    - La Colaborativa, Chelsea
    - Everett Community Growers, Everett
    - Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, Springfield
    - Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts, Inc., Worcester
Environmental Justice

• La Colaborativa, Chelsea
  – Safe Homes Support Healthy Lives Project
    • Revise ”Made Up To Code Toolkit”
      – Document housing code violations
      – Document hazardous living conditions
    • Build community capacity to
      – Understand their rights as tenants
      – Advocate for themselves
      – Hold landlords and city officials accountable to address environmental hazards
Environmental Justice

• Everett Community Growers, Everett
  – Build on its “Heat Health and Housing: Organizing for Resident-led Strategies for Development Without Displacement
  • Project is a series of community workshops focused on developing community-led resilience solutions through engaging residents in a series of workshops
  • Develop strategies to help the community be resilient to climate change
Environmental Justice

• Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts, Springfield
  – Expand on its “Healthy Air Network Project,”
  – A community air quality data collection collaboration, by developing educational materials for the public about risks and ways to reduce exposure
Environmental Justice

• Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts, Inc., Worcester
  – Increase awareness of environmental and public health issues that affect Southeast Asian and other immigrant, refugee, and asylee communities through the Environmental and Public Health Education program
Revised Housing Code

• Clarifications

  – 410.260(A) Every dwelling unit, and rooming unit shall have as many means of exit as will allow for the safe passage of all people in accordance with 780 CMR: Massachusetts State Building Code.

  – 410.900(E) When a residence or portion thereof has been condemned and the occupant of a condemned residence is not the owner of the residence, the owner shall provide comparable, suitable housing
    • If the reason the unit is found to be Unfit for Human Habitation because of the occupant, the owner is not required to provide other housing
Revised Housing Code