

**From:** Korfmacher, Katrina  
**Sent:** Friday, March 04, 2016 3:04 PM  
**To:** Garland, Frank  
**Cc:** Korfmacher, Katrina  
**Subject:** CORRECTED: lead test kits

Dear Mr. Garland,

I am reaching out in regard to a news segment that was sent by a friend who lives in Buffalo. It said that 'officials' (not sure who) are giving out lead test kits.

I am writing to find out what kind of kits are being used and by whom.

As the attached article indicates, the 'stick' type of lead swab, while very accurate in the lab, can be quite misleading in homeowner application. In fact, without strong support and education of each person using them, I believe the net result of handing these out to the public can be extremely hazardous. It is very easy for a homeowner using the swabs to miss the lead in their home and, believing the house is safe, then do work that CREATES a major lead dust hazard. I am sure the city would not want to be liable – ethically or legally - for such a scenario. Additionally, home owners or residents should be informed that if they DO have a positive test, this constitutes 'knowledge' of lead that must be disclosed to future tenants or buyers of the home under the federal disclosure rule. Overall, I think there is strong national consensus in the lead public health community that distributing swabs as an 'outreach' or community giveaway is a very dangerous idea unless done in close partnership with appropriately-educated health, housing, or community staff to provide interpretation of the results.

Instead, we recommend that all families living in pre-1978 housing ASSUME that there is lead paint in their home and conduct cleaning, maintenance, and repairs on the presumption that there is lead-based paint, lead in dust, and lead in soil. [www.letsmakeleadhistory.org](http://www.letsmakeleadhistory.org) has great resources for doing so. Alternately, we recommend a professional risk assessment (\$450) or dust wipe testing (\$150) by a professional. I am certain that your colleagues at the Erie County Health Dept. and the Western NY lead poisoning prevention center have additional informational resources.

Please confirm that you received my message, let me know if you forward this to colleagues/members of City Council, and if you have any further questions. I am also making an effort to identify and share this information with community members in Buffalo to help inform effective and accurate educational outreach about lead. I would also appreciate knowing what the status of this plan is, and whether it is implemented or changed.

Sincerely,

Katrina Smith Korfmacher, PhD Director,  
Community Outreach and Engagement Core, Environmental Health Sciences Center Associate  
Professor, Department of Environmental Medicine  
University of Rochester Medical Center, Rochester, NY