



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

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NYC COUNCIL PASSES BILL TO STRENGTHEN ENFORCEMENT OF LEAD LAWS IN HOMES AND SCHOOLS

***Led by CM Chin, bill will for the first time legally require
DOE to regularly test DOE classrooms for lead***



CITY HALL – Today, Council Member Margaret S. Chin passed historic legislation that will strengthen the City’s mechanisms to enforce against landlords who do not remediate lead upon turnover of a unit, and will also – for the first time – legally require the Department of Education to regularly inspect classrooms for lead.

Before today, schools did not have a legal requirement to regularly investigate and survey spaces for lead hazards. [Intro 873-A](#) mandates DOE to inspect and survey classrooms for children under six years old at least three times a year, and ancillary spaces like gymnasiums, libraries and cafeterias at least once a year. Furthermore, these results must be publicly accessible to parents.

“When it comes to protecting the health and safety of our children, our City must do whatever it takes,” said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin**. “Schools are where our kids spend most of their waking hours. Today, we’re taking a bold step to make sure all the spaces our children breathe in and play in are clear of dangerous toxic lead.”

Passed in 2004, Local Law 1, also known as the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Act, set an ambitious goal to end childhood lead poisoning in New York City by 2010. More than 15 years since it went to effect, and 10 years after its 2010 deadline, thousands of children continue to be exposed annually – with many facing debilitating long term health effects.

Last summer, an [investigation](#) by *WNYC/Gothamist* discovered alarming levels of lead contamination from peeling paint inside a few public schools. The New York City Council then spearheaded an effort

to push DOE to correct these loopholes. Intro 873-A codifies the protections that DOE established last year.

The bill will also enable the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to more strongly push landlords to comply with Local Law 1, which requires them to remediate homes of lead at turnover, or when a new family moves into an apartment. This bill will require HPD, when conducting certain inspections, to determine whether landlords violated this requirement, and will establish a presumption that a landlord has violated the requirement if they do not produce a record of lead remediation at turnover.

“The tenants of Lead Dust Free NYC continue to organize against lead dust contamination in their homes. Uncontrolled, lead laden, construction dust has been a problem for too long,” **said Brandon Kielbasa, Cooper Square Committee’s Director of Organizing.** “Intro 873 is a step in the right direction and will improve the City’s overall response to lead contamination. Many thanks to Councilmember Chin for all her outstanding efforts to stamp out lead contamination.”

Last November, advocates of Lead Dust Free NYC released a [scathing report](#) that highlighted the City’s failure to hold landlords accountable for exposing their residents to lead. Although the City issued almost \$2 million in violations since the passage of Local Law 1, it collected a paltry .5% – roughly \$10,000 – of what is owed.

Council Member Chin is also the sponsor of another bill, Intro 874, to strengthen inter-agency cooperation and enforcement in response to lead-dust complaints. This bill is currently receiving feedback from advocates and the Administration.

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