Message

From: Kaiser, Steven [kaiser.steven@epa.gov]
Sent: 3/22/2017 3:01:21 PM
To: Carla Morgan [cmorgan@eastchicago.com]; McCoy, Lisa [LMcCoy@idem.IN.gov]
CC: Garypie, Catherine [garypie.catherine@epa.gov]; Kyte, Larry [kyte.larry@epa.gov]; Toney, Marcy [toney.marcy@epa.gov]; Nelson, Leverett [nelson.leverett@epa.gov]
Subject: USS Lead - Press

East Chicago press clips
US EPA Region 5 – prepared by the Office of Public Affairs
March 22, 2017

NWI Times -	**East Chicago families question temporary move to Chicago, elsewhere**
CBS Chicago -	**EPA Begins The Removal Of Lead Contaminated Soil In East Chicago**
US News -	**EPA Gets $16M for Cleanup of East Chicago's Superfund Site**
Indiana Public Media -	**EPA Gets $16M More For Lead Clean-Up In East Chicago Superfund**
WaPo	**EPA gets $16M for cleanup of East Chicago's Superfund site**

http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/east-chicago-families-question-temporary-move-to-chicago-elsewhere/article_6d3739ec-8950-582c-818b-9dd906b3c8a5.html

East Chicago families question temporary move to Chicago, elsewhere

- Lauren Cross lauren.cross@nwi.com, 219-933-3206
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- Mar 21, 2017 Updated 8 hrs ago EAST CHICAGO — Tara Adams said she heard a knock on the door Tuesday afternoon.

When she went outside to see who it was, she said she saw a letter from the East Chicago Housing Authority wedged in the doorway.

It was a 10-day emergency relocation notice explaining that the local housing authority will soon have a moving company transport her belongings to a housing unit assigned to her on Chicago's South Side. The company will begin moving her household items the week of April 3 through 7 as she continues to search for permanent housing.

"I am not moving to Chicago. I will not put my son and my daughter and myself in that situation," said Adams, a a longtime resident at the lead- and arsenic-contaminated West Calumet Housing Complex. "I need somewhere that I feel safe. Listen, I know that East Chicago is not the best city, but it's home for me. It's home."

The West Calumet Housing Complex, built in the early 1970s on the footprint of a former lead smelter, is eyed for demolition by the city. Families first learned last summer that they were being forced to relocate due to high lead levels in the soil.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development gave local housing officials the power to initiate emergency transfers beginning March 31 if they so choose. Adams' letter, obtained by The Times, states that boxes for self-packing are available at the ECHA's property management office and tenants are responsible for ensuring "all items are ready for transport."

Most households' relocation vouchers do not expire until the end of June, HUD has said. Even as they move to temporary housing, families will have about 12 more weeks to continue searching for a new home, HUD has said.

HUD and ECHA officials have said they remain committed to assisting families in finding permanent housing. HUD, in granting ECHA the ability to initiate emergency transfers, argued the 346-unit housing complex was turning into an unsafe environment due to the high vacancy levels. About 80 families remain at the complex.

Adams' letter states rent abatement, as required under a civil rights agreement reached between ECHA and a housing justice watchdog group in November, will end March 31 and tenants will be required to pay rent effective April 1.

"Failure to pay rent may also result in the initiation of legal proceedings," the letter states.

HUD officials have said families can work with the ECHA if they have found another unit and the move-in date is during the first week of April.

Emily Coffey with Chicago-based Shriver Center, a housing justice nonprofit that represents families at West Calumet, said several families will have to cross state lines into Illinois with the emergency transfer — even those who intended to remain in Indiana once they found permanent housing outside of West Calumet.
Coffey said the notices sent out Tuesday were "unnecessary and harmful," adding that the "the families just began working with a new housing counseling program and this move-out will seriously obstruct that effort."
She said the transfers to Chicago "will adversely affect schooling and employment."
"It will also force families to re-apply for public assistance, including Medicaid health benefits and (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) in Illinois. When they again move back to Indiana they will have to do it all over again," Coffey said. "HUD and ECHA have seriously failed to consider the harm and chaos they are creating for these families."
Residents have a right to file a grievance and have an informal hearing with ECHA, Coffey said. The request for a hearing must be made within 10 days.
Akeesha Daniels, of West Calumet, said she is concerned about moving her 13-year-old boy, who has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, from East Chicago to Chicago. She has two other sons, ages 19 and 25.
She was assigned an apartment unit on the city's South Side, according to a letter she provided to The Times.
"I don't understand. We would have to switch over everything to Illinois. This is not a permanent spot. This is just for a minute," Daniels said. "So they're going to pay to have someone move me all the way to Chicago and then you're going to turn around and pay someone else to move me back to Indiana? I don't understand."

https://indianapublicmedia.org/news/temporary-moves-draw-remaining-west-calumet-residents-116378/
Temporary Moves Draw Near For Remaining West Calumet Residents
By Annie Ropeik
Posted March 21, 2017
Around 80 families still live in lead-contaminated public housing in East Chicago. They'll learn this week where the city will relocate them after March 31.
Residents are still using housing vouchers from HUD to search for new housing. Most of those vouchers expire in June.
Around 80 families are still living in lead-contaminated public housing in East Chicago, Indiana. This week, they'll receive details about where the city plans to relocate them after the March 31 deadline to move out.
U.S. Housing and Urban Development spokeswoman Elena Gaona say 250 families have relocated from West Calumet Housing Complex since the lead crisis began last fall. Another 19 have housing lined up.
The remaining 81 will be moved to lead-free units HUD and the city have chosen in East Chicago, Gary and Chicago's Housing Authorities.
"If families are satisfied with their new units, they can opt to sign a lease and remain there as their new home, avoiding a double move," Gaona said in an email. "If families do not like their new temporary home, they are encouraged to continue meeting with the housing counselors available to them to find their new permanent home."
Residents are still using housing vouchers from HUD to search for new housing. Most of those vouchers expire in June.
Gaona says HUD will continue providing relocation services to residents that need them, but the agency will close its temporary West Calumet office on April 7 and move those services off-site.
Residents can also appeal the housing authority's decision to move them, she says, and "can work with" the Housing Authority if they've found a new home but can't move in until the beginning of April.
Otherwise, Gaona says, the Housing Authority is authorized to pay for the moves.
"Between March 31 to April 1 [sic], [East Chicago Housing Authority-]contracted movers will transport residents' belongings to the emergency transfer units," Gaona said in her email. "Final residents' moves should be completed by April 3."
After that, the city will still need HUD approval for its plan to raze West Calumet. HUD officials have said they expect to issue that approval after all families at the complex have moved out.

http://chicago.cbslocal.com/2017/03/21/epa-begins-the-removal-of-lead-contaminated-soil-in-east-chicago/
EPA Begins The Removal Of Lead Contaminated Soil In East Chicago
March 21, 2017 11:09 AM
Filed Under: East Chicago, EPA, lead, Mike Krauser
CHICAGO (CBS) — The Environmental Protection Agency announced Monday plans to remove lead and arsenic from the East Chicago USS Lead Superfund site.

The EPA will begin removing soil contaminated with arsenic and lead from about 200 properties. WBBM's Mike Krauser reports.
The mayor has asked the state for more than $50 million for a massive cleanup, including the replacement of lead pipes. The EPA said $16 million has come from parties potentially responsible for the contamination.
"Governor Holcomb and I agree that protecting the well-being of the people who live on the USS Lead Superfund site is crucial," EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a statement. "EPA is accelerating the cleanup to keep residents safe in their homes and neighborhoods."
The EPA will also be conducting testing inside homes.

https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana/articles/2017-03-21/epa-gets-16m-for-cleanup-of-east-chicagos-superfund-site

EPA Gets $16M for Cleanup of East Chicago's Superfund Site

The Environmental Protection Agency is preparing to begin remediation work on 192 properties within a Superfund site in East Chicago affected by an ongoing lead contamination crisis.

| March 21, 2017, at 11:10 a.m.

AP

CROWN POINT, Ind. (AP) — The Environmental Protection Agency is preparing to begin remediation work on nearly 200 properties within a Superfund site in East Chicago affected by an ongoing lead contamination crisis.

The cleanup will be bolstered by $16 million the EPA secured from the parties responsible for the contamination at the site, which includes the city's Calumet neighborhood.

EPA officials say the 192 properties targeted for cleanup have high concentrations of lead and arsenic in the soil.

The state is still reviewing its options to give additional resources to help East Chicago deal with the contamination crisis.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a statement that he and Gov. Eric Holcomb agree that it's crucial to protect the well-being of the people who live on the Superfund site.

Information from: The Times, http://www.nwitimes.com

http://indianapublicmedia.org/news/epa-16m-lead-cleanup-east-chicago-superfund-116372/

EPA Gets $16M More For Lead Clean-Up In East Chicago Superfund

By Nick Janzen
Posted March 21, 2017
The EPA says cleanup of the West Calumet Housing Complex — which East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland ordered demolished last year — is temporarily on hold.
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has secured an additional $16 million to clean up a lead-contaminated Superfund site in the Calumet neighborhood of East Chicago, Indiana.
That money comes after "an agreement with several potentially responsible parties," according to an EPA press release issued Tuesday.
Combined with $26 million from a 2014 settlement with DuPont and Atlantic Richfield, it will fund clean-up work in two parts of the Superfund site. That work is set to resume in April.
In the press release, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt says "protecting the well-being of the people who live on the USS Lead Superfund site is crucial," and that the EPA is accelerating the cleanup.
The Superfund is comprised of a former USS Lead facility, a residential neighborhood and the West Calumet Housing Complex. It was designated in 2009, and its lead and arsenic contamination is hundreds of times higher than the legal limit. Cleanup began in 2016, and this year, the EPA says it plans on cleaning up nearly 200 contaminated properties.
The EPA also says cleanup of the West Calumet Housing Complex — which East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland ordered demolished last year — is temporarily on hold.

This is a developing story. Check back for updates as more information becomes available.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/energy-environment/epa-gets-16m-for-cleanup-of-east-chicagos-superfund-site/2017/03/21/b7fec664-0e4a-11e7-aa57-2ca1b05c41b8_story.html?utm_term=.c7d44baa6d0b

EPA gets $16M for cleanup of East Chicago's Superfund site
By Associated Press
Energy & Environment
March 21 at 11:26 AM
CROWN POINT, Ind. — The Environmental Protection Agency is preparing to begin remediation work on nearly 200 properties within a Superfund site in East Chicago affected by an ongoing lead contamination crisis.
The cleanup will be bolstered by $16 million the EPA secured from the parties responsible for the contamination at the site, which includes the city's Calumet neighborhood.
EPA officials say the 192 properties targeted for cleanup have high concentrations of lead and arsenic in the soil.
The state is still reviewing its options to give additional resources to help East Chicago deal with the contamination crisis.
EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a statement that he and Gov. Eric Holcomb agree that it's crucial to protect the well-being of the people who live on the Superfund site.

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Sincerely,

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