

Heating up with the

Breathe easy
at home program

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Collaborative Meeting on Safe & Healthy Housing, 2014

Each year, Breathe Easy at Home is part of the city's Collaborative Meeting on Safe and Healthy Housing. The meeting is attended by Housing inspectors from Inspectional Services, Lead and Environmental Hazards inspectors from the Boston Public Health Commission, and managers from the Boston Housing Authority. The meeting serves to bring these agencies together to network and hear about best collaborative practices for their work in the field. They also participate in case studies of example cases where they are required to problem-solve triaging resources.

This year, the Meeting hosted 140 people, adding to its attendee list staff from the Boston Inspectional

Services Department Housing and Legal Divisions; Boston Public Health Commission Lead, Environmental Hazards, the Elderly Commission, and Healthy Baby/Healthy Child programs; and Boston Housing Authority maintenance supervisors, managers, and legal staff.

This year's meeting focused on the importance, barriers, and successes of resident engagement experienced in the field. A resident panel featuring advocates and community health workers from the Boston Housing Authority and the Health Resources in Action and former BHA resident highlighted real-life experiences of residents and the importance of a trusting relationship between

members of the agencies present and the residents they work with. Introduced by Dion Irish, Master of Ceremonies for the day, guest speakers included the city's Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Barbara Ferrer, Executive Director at the Boston Public Health Commission, Bill McGonagle, Administrator for the Boston Housing Authority, and new Commissioner of Inspectional Services, Bill Christopher.



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Women (with asthma) Breathe Free

We are excited to announce the launch of *Women Breathe Free* in Boston, designed to help women with asthma better manage symptoms unique to being a woman. This education program developed by the Center for Managing Chronic Disease at the University of Michigan is for women who have either participated or have had their child participate in the Asthma Home Visiting Program in the past. Women will receive

an asthma workbook and four telephone-based asthma counseling sessions with a health educator. The health educator offers a step-by-step approach based on the PRIDE (problem identification, research & observation, identifying a goal, developing a plan, and establishing appropriate rewards for successes) method to help women develop strategies to

reduce or avoid asthma triggers and barriers to care, and encourages communication between women and their health care providers so they get the most out of their asthma treatment. For more information, please contact Nathalie Bazil at (617) 534-5965.



Allergy Season Tips for People with Asthma

Providers, be mindful of some of these tips for your patients with asthma!

- Prevent entry of pollen by keeping windows and doors closed. Air conditioning in warm weather is best and also helps control dust mites by reducing humidity. If you have one, change filters often in window units.
- Control dust. Keep surfaces in the home clean and uncluttered. Bare floors and walls are best, particularly in the bedroom where you spend one-third of your time.
- Remove "dust collectors" from bedrooms, such as stuffed toys, wall hangings, books, knickknacks, and artificial flowers.
- Keep stuffed animals and toys in plastic containers for easy access. Get fun, brightly colored containers and enlist kids in a "game" of clean-up after each play session.
- Go carpet free! Minimize the amount of carpeting you have, especially in the bedroom. Dust mites and mold love to hide in carpets. Hardwood floors, seamless vinyl or linoleum floor coverings are easier to clean and are your best options.
- Dusting and vacuuming stir up dust, making the air worse until the dust settles. Wear a mask if you do the cleaning yourself. If possible, try to have someone without allergies do the cleaning.
- Use zippered allergen impermeable or plastic covers on all pillows, mattresses and box springs. Encasing mattresses works better than air cleaners to reduce allergy symptoms.
- Every week, wash bedding, uncovered pillows and stuffed toys in hot water (130 degree F.) to kill dust mites.

"Whether hosting a BBQ, spending the day at the park, or biking, it is important that you follow our tips on outdoor safety to have a fun, yet safe and healthy, season."

Summer Safety

As the temperature rises in the city, Boston springs to life with activity after a long winter.

Whether hosting a BBQ, spending the day at the park, or biking, it is important to follow tips on outdoor safety to have a fun, yet safe and healthy, season.

The Boston Public Health Commission's Injury Prevention Program has several resources available to protect

from the summer sun, food and grilling safety, avoid animal bites, prevent illness from mosquitoes and/or ticks, water safety, bike safety, and prevent window falls. Click [here](#) to access information, flyers, and the **Sixty Second Summer Safety Series** on [YouTube!](#) To reach the Injury Prevention Program directly, call (617)534-5699.

For general information about injury prevention regarding

seatbelts, bike and helmet safety, window falls prevention, and pedestrian safety by visiting the Boston Public Health Commission's [Injury Prevention Program](#) webpage.



Smoke Detectors: Photoelectric vs. Ionization Technologies

For residents fire safety, it is important to test and check the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and to replace them if you are not certain that they are fully charged to minimize risk of injury due to fire or carbon monoxide poisoning.

Something residents may not be aware of are the two different kinds of smoke detectors to help maximize fire safety in the home.

Ionization smoke detectors:

- Use radiation to detect smoke.
- More effective in detecting flaming fires
- Increased risk of nuisance alarms caused by steam or cooking smoke
- Most commonly used smoke alarms

Photoelectric smoke detectors:

- Use light to detect smoke
- More effective in detecting smoldering fires, which have been attributed to more fires involving death
- Low voltage or wireless low voltage systems only use photoelectric detectors

For More Information, call the Boston Fire Dept 617-343-3415 or visit the National Fire Prevention Association's website: <http://www.nfpa.org/>



The two kinds of smoke detectors to help maximize fire safety in the home.