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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New Report: California's Pollution Strains Economy with \$254 Million in Preventable Child Healthcare Costs

Environmental Health Coalition says better transportation options in low-income communities can protect children from illnesses caused by toxic air in San Diego

SAN DIEGO, June 16, 2015—Today, the California Environmental Health Tracking Program released a [report](#) on the economic impact of preventable toxic pollution on healthcare costs for children statewide. The study, funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, found that certain sources of pollution, including lead paint and toxic air, cost the state of California and families up to a combined \$254 million per year in child healthcare costs.

[Environmental Health Coalition \(EHC\)](#), an organization fighting toxic pollution in San Diego, has worked for 35 years to educate residents in low-income neighborhoods on in-home lead pollution and the hazards of breathing polluted air. According to EHC, today's report validates its work fighting toxic pollution and building healthy communities.

"We know that healthy communities, both inside and out of the home, support a thriving local economy," says Joy Williams, research director of the Environmental Health Coalition. "These sources of pollution can be reduced so that children don't become sick just because of where they live. We hope this study encourages community decision makers and leaders to take responsibility for better planning that protects our health and each other."

In San Diego alone, nearly 1,700 children suffer from lead poisoning each year. [Lead poisoning](#) can lead to permanent cognitive and health complications and burden families with increased healthcare costs. According to the study, lead exposure has the greatest overall financial impact of the four conditions studied, resulting in lost earnings of \$8 to 11 billion over the lifetime of children born each year. To prevent lead poisoning in San Diego, EHC offers free inspections for homes built before 1979 to test levels of lead paint and connect residents to remediation services. EHC also works with other health organizations to offer free blood-lead tests several times each year.

Today's study also reports asthma triggered by air pollution costs California families and the state a combined \$208 million every year in healthcare fees. The rate of emergency room visits for asthma-related problems in Barrio Logan remains three times the San Diego County average and the neighborhood has been identified as a toxic hot spot by the state's pollution screening tool, [CalEnviroScreen](#).

[Click here for the full study](#) released by the California Environmental Health Tracking Program.

For more information on Environmental Health Coalition and its efforts to reduce toxic pollution in the San Diego/Tijuana region, visit www.environmentalhealth.org.

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COALITION: Founded in 1980, Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) builds grassroots campaigns to confront the unjust consequences of toxic pollution, discriminatory land use and unsustainable energy policies. Visit us online at <http://www.environmentalhealth.org>.