Lead Poisoning Prevention Task Force to Receive National Achievement in Environmental Justice Award

SAN DIEGO – On Tuesday, January 31, 2012 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will present a national award to San Diego’s Lead Poisoning Prevention Citizen’s Advisory Task Force for empowering communities to conduct lead hazard control work in environmental justice communities, and ensuring the protection of children from the threat of lead-based paint and dust. Task Force Partners include Environmental Health Coalition, Lead Safe Neighborhoods Program, City of San Diego Lead Safe San Diego Program, San Diego Housing Commission and Western Center on Law & Poverty.

Lisa Garcia, U.S. EPA Associate Assistant Administrator for Environmental Justice will present the award at the San Diego City Council hearing at 2:00 PM at 202 C Street. "The recipients of environmental justice awards have developed projects that empower communities to participate in environmental decision-making and serve as models for other communities working to address environmental justice concerns," said Ms. Garcia. "These partnerships help advance efforts to make our communities healthier and economically and environmentally sustainable."

"We are proud of our work to build effective partnerships and empower community residents to make decisions that make our children and our neighborhoods healthier. As a result of our partnership the Children’s Right to Lead-Safety Housing Ordinance was adopted which ensures that children living in pre-1978 homes are protected from dangers of lead-based paint and dust." said Diane Takvorian, Executive Director of Environmental Health Coalition.

As a result of training to address concerns about lead poisoning, residents have become advocates and spokespersons for their community. The partnership has attracted more than $18 million in funding to educate residents and conduct lead hazard control work in the City of San Diego. More than 250 children under the age of 6 and living in low-income communities of color have been tested for lead in their blood. More than 1000 homes have been made lead-safe. The Task Force also secured funds for training and certifying workers in lead remediation and lead-safe work practices.

The award is part of EPA’s National Achievements in Environmental Justice Awards Program, which recognizes partnerships that address local environmental justice concerns and result in positive environmental and human health benefits in communities. More information on the National Achievements in Environmental Justice Awards: [http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/awards/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/awards/index.html)

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