



Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: UNC Partnerships with Tier I Counties (Part V): Mitigating health risks in homes

By CED Guest Author

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As described in parts I, II, III, and IV of this series, UNC Chapel Hill faculty, staff and students are engaged in creative partnerships with Tier I counties across North Carolina. This post is the fourth in a series highlighting community and economic development partnerships between Tier I counties and UNC. The purpose of this series is to provide examples of projects, for potential or future community partners, in which UNC resources have been available to assist Tier I counties.

The UNC Center for Environmental Health and Susceptibility (CEHS) offers “healthy homes” programming across North Carolina. Healthy Homes involves working with underserved communities, especially those that are susceptible to environmental health hazards in homes. The work is led by the Center’s Community Outreach and Engagement Core.

Lenoir County:

CEHS is working with leaders in Lenoir County (and elsewhere) to implement healthy homes. The Center’s work in Lenoir aims to address environmental health risks associated with unsafe housing, such as radon, carbon monoxide, lead, asbestos, mold, pests, and injury hazards. A capstone student team from the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health is studying the county’s environmental health education needs. The capstone team is developing a community needs assessment report detailing locally significant environmental and home-based health risks. The team will present its results at the end of the semester, and the Center will use its findings and recommendations to improve outreach in Lenoir County.

Outreach services available from the Center include training for community-based health advocates (the National Center for Healthy Housing Community Health Worker curriculum); one-on-one and large group education on healthy homes; and general advice about specific healthy homes problems for families, landlords and other community members.

Kathleen Gray, Neasha Graves, and Amy MacDonald deliver the Center’s outreach and engagement services.

Will Lambe authored the NC Rural Center report, Small Towns, Big Ideas, and he served as Director of the Community and Economic Development Program at the School of Government from 2009 to 2014.