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**Multnomah County Environmental Health honored with
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
National Exemplary Award**

Healthy Homes Collaborative is one of thirteen projects honored nationally

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Multnomah County Environmental Health's Healthy Homes Collaborative is one of thirteen recipients of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Exemplary Award. The award is given to community-based programs working to improve the health and well-being of asthma patients. EPA created the National Asthma Awards Program to highlight successful programs and accelerate the adoption of best practices.

The Multnomah County Healthy Homes Collaborative is a three-year project funded by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program seeks to create a comprehensive approach to provide direct services to families with children who have asthma and are at risk for lead poisoning. The project also aims to build community resources and to effect policy change. As part of this effort, the Multnomah County Healthy Homes Collaborative will sponsor a Healthy Homes Summit on May 17, 2007. Summit organizers hope to identify the key elements necessary for housing policy change to connect health with housing in Multnomah County.

The Healthy Homes Collaborative links home-based health care with clinics and community-based education. The grant will provide services to 200 families with children under the age of six who have asthma and are receiving health care in Multnomah County health clinics. Each family participating in the program receives education about asthma medical self-management as well as information on the environmental factors inside the home that exacerbate the children's asthma symptoms. Environmental factors include: mold, cockroaches, rodents, dust, dander, dust mites, tobacco smoke, and household chemicals such as bleach and ammonia.

"This award is not only recognition of the work of Multnomah County Health Department, but acknowledges the contribution of many other agencies. We are working with community health and housing organizations, government agencies, and elected officials to encourage a balanced approach to develop policies that support affordable and healthy housing," states Lillian M. Shirley, Health Department Director.

Agencies participating in Multnomah County's Healthy Homes Collaborative include the City of Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development, Portland Development Commission, Housing Authority of Portland, Community Alliance of Tenants, Office of Neighborhood Involvement, Community Energy Project, Josiah Hill Clinic, and Multnomah County's Weatherization and Energy Assistance Program.