

COUNTY OF KANE



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Kane County Health Department Honors Olga del Toro for 30 Years of Public Health Service

The Kane County Health Department (KCHD) proudly recognizes the retirement of Olga del Toro, Lead Risk Assessor with the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, who is concluding a remarkable 30-year career dedicated to improving the health and safety of families in Kane County.

At the April 16 Kane County Board Public Health Committee meeting, del Toro was honored for her decades of service across multiple public health programs. Since joining KCHD in the mid-1990s, she has contributed to Family Case Management, Tobacco Prevention, Osteoporosis Screening, HealthWorks, nutrition education, and the health clinic. In 2008, she transitioned to the Lead Program, where she has worked to identify and reduce lead exposure risks in local homes.

Throughout her time in the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, del Toro has witnessed major changes, including a significant shift in state-mandated blood lead level thresholds that prompt investigations—from 25 micrograms per deciliter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) when she started, to 3.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ today. Using an XRF (X-ray fluorescence) machine, she has conducted detailed inspections of homes—testing walls, windows, doors, and collecting samples to identify sources of lead, which is most commonly found on windows.

Olga's favorite part of her work has been educating families about how to reduce their risk of lead poisoning. "Often clients feel overwhelmed when they learn their child has tested positive for lead, so I've learned that repetition is key," she said. "Education has always been the most rewarding part of my job."

She also emphasized the need for public awareness about common and surprising sources of lead exposure. "Many people don't realize that lead can be found in imported cooking items, hardware store products, or sold in ethnic supermarkets. Sometimes, warnings on cookware are printed only in English, which means non-English speakers may not understand the risks," del Toro noted.

While she looks forward to wintering in Texas with her family, del Toro says what she will miss most is the people she worked with at KCHD. "My coworkers are smart, hardworking, and always eager to learn. I'm really going to miss them."

"For 30 years, Olga has served Kane County with compassion and professionalism. Her work has protected countless children and families, and her commitment to public health has left a lasting legacy," said Michael Isaacson, Executive Director of the Kane County Health Department. "As she prepares to retire this May, we extend our deepest gratitude and congratulations."

The Kane County Health Department extends heartfelt thanks to Olga del Toro for her decades of service, leadership, and dedication to community health.



