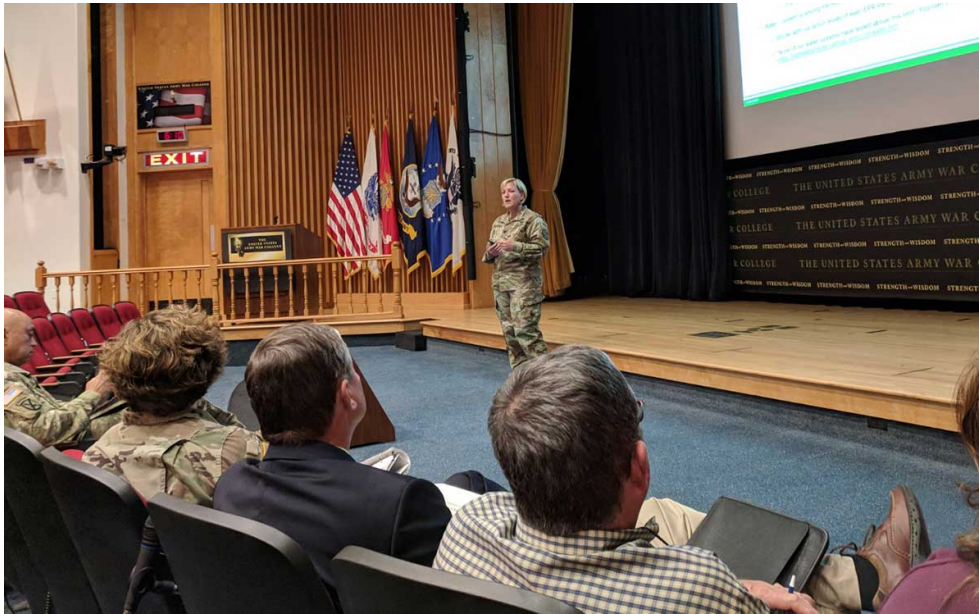


Lead paint concerns, prevention topic of town hall meeting

By Thomas Zimmerman 25 September 2018



Lt. Col. Sally Hannan, Garrison Commander speaks to residents, employees and family members during the Sept. 12 Town Hall Meeting.

Carlisle Barracks, Army War College, and Dunham Clinic leadership hosted a town hall meeting Sept. 12 to address possible lead-based paint concerns in Army and privatized homes here and across the Army and have continued actions to address the concern in the days and weeks since.

“This is an important issue here and across the Army, said Col. Kimo Gallahue, Army War College Deputy Commandant. “We want to let you know what we have done, what we are doing and what we will do in regards to addressing these concerns.”

During the hour-long town hall, leadership shared an overview of the issue from an Army-wide perspective and then provided detailed information about Carlisle Barracks homes, the programs in place to mitigate hazards and provided links to resources.

“This is something we are committed to investing time and effort to,” said

Lt. Col. Sally Hannan, Garrison Commander. "We are very confident that we have the team to address concerns." Hannan shared that there have not been any health-related lead paint concerns at Carlisle Barracks.

Hannan explained Army plans to assess current actions to protect families from health hazards associated with lead by the housing partner, Balfour Beatty Communities, and future assessments of procedures for pre-1978 homes with children under the age of 6. After these reviews are complete the Army will determine if additional validation efforts are required.

After the formal presentation residents in attendance were able to ask questions of the leadership and BBC staff. Many of the questions were focused on response times to work orders, gaining clarification on key items from the brief and what the next steps were in the process.

"Our role is to check the checker, to advocate for the families on the installation and across the Army with our partners to ensure that they are capturing those key concerns and they are following the procedures and processes that we have agreed to," said Hannan of the Army's relationship with BBC. "I do believe that the health and safety of our residents is their top priority and we're going to work together to validate these plans as we move forward."

Residents were able to speak to BBC and Garrison staff after the meeting about specific questions concerning their homes. Anyone with questions about their home can also contact BBC at (717) 243-7177 or the Army Housing Office at (717) 245-4951.

The work on validating the current plans and practices has already begun, with Carlisle Barracks leadership reviewing housing records as recently as Sept. 27. The post has also provided the number of pre-1978 homes to be inspected to the Army and are awaiting guidance on how to proceed.

"Once we have the final plan in place we will be sure to communicate it with our community," said Hannan. She also said she anticipates hosting another town hall meeting after the results of the records and home inspections have been completed.

Garrison Commander shares details of situation at Carlisle Barracks

The federal government banned lead-based paint from use in housing in 1978, so the Army assumes that most houses built before 1978 contain some level of lead-based paint, said Hannan.

"The primary area of concern are the pre-1978 homes that have children 6

years of age and younger that live there or spend significant time there,” she said.

At Carlisle Barracks, there are 93 housing units, 80 of which are occupied that were constructed before 1978, with 18 of those occupied by families with children 6 and under. Both the Moore Child Development Center (1993) and Sgt. Andrew McConnell Youth Center (2014) were constructed after 1978.

The primary method of dealing with lead paint is encapsulation, which involves covering the lead paint with non-lead based paint. It becomes a concern when that layer of paint deteriorates or is damaged, causing flaking which may releases dust or paint chips to the surrounding environment.

“That’s why it is so important that these homes are regularly inspected and residents make Balfour Beatty Communities aware of any concerns,” said Hannan.

The Garrison Commander shared BBCs processes and data collection that includes a comprehensive database identifying homes that contain lead-based paint, disclosures provided to all residents and inspections during the turn-over period. During these assessments, the homes are inspected visually for paint damage, to include taking samples of significantly damaged paint. She said that further assessments and work will be done if the screening identifies a hazard.

“Interior risks are considered urgent work orders, with action taken immediately,” she said. Exterior concerns, especially if present among multiple housing units requires additional times and resources to repair.

Residents may request access to these reports and test results by contacting BBC.

Water system exceeds Pa standards

The water system at Carlisle Barracks is tested regularly for the presence of lead. Testing is done on the kitchen taps of homes on Forbes Ave as they receive their water from the oldest section of the water system here.

“We use an even stricter action level than the EPA when testing for lead in our water,” said Hannan. “None of our testing have shown levels anywhere near the action level and in most cases, lead is not detected at all.”

Army Way Ahead

Hannan discussed new plans being developed by the Army to execute a tiered approach to validating that current Army procedures protect families from health hazards associated with lead. This plan will validate procedures for Army Owned and leased houses as well as privatized houses under Residential Communities Initiative (RCI).

The first tier of assessments will focus on already submitted work orders for lead-based hazards, which is already underway at Carlisle Barracks. The second tier will focus on a proportion of pre-1978 houses with children 6 and under.

“This assessment will tell us if our lead management procedures are effective and that potable water has been properly sampled,” said Hannan. “After reviewing these results, the Army will assess the effectiveness of these procedures and determine whether additional validation efforts are required. We are working with BBC to review and validate their process for responding to work requests associated with lead-based paint hazards.”

A schedule of when and where the assessments will begin will be once reviewed by the Army.

Resources, testing available for lead-based paint exposure

Lt. Col. Elizabeth Duque, Commander of Dunham Health Clinic shared details about the health aspects of lead exposure and what concerned parents and residents can do.

“Exposure to lead-based paint in young children may lead to hearing problems, anemia and behavior and learning problems,” she said. “If you are concerned about your child I encourage you to schedule an appointment with your child’s primary care physician. They will ask some questions to help determine if your child should be tested for lead exposure.”

Duque also shared links to resources from the Army Public Health Command to help parents be more informed about the issue.

“We are partners in ensuring the health and well-being of your children,” she said. “We are as dedicated as you are to this goal, so please share your concerns with us.”

To schedule an appointment call Dunham at (717) 245-3400.
