

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

To develop feasible working models that can be applied in other communities, the issues of cost-effectiveness and homeowner participation need to be addressed. In the absence of a HUD-funded municipal program, or for those homeowners or residents not eligible for grants or loans from such a program, less costly approaches can be considered. In Boston, the EMPACT Lead-Safe Yard Project is currently investigating the following possibilities, several of which could be drawn upon in carrying out a lead-safe yard program at the local level:

- Using a model based on the principles developed by Habitat for Humanity, in which the work involved in achieving a lead-safe yard is carried out by the homeowner with the help of community volunteers (possibly other residents in the area who would then receive help with their yards). Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit organization that builds and rehabilitates low-cost homes through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, with the help of homeowner (partner) families.
- Offering courses/workshops for homeowners and for landscapers through a local community college or other adult education program. Such a course would include information on building and landscaping techniques and materials, as well as maintenance required to achieve lead-safe yards. This could be part of a longer course on home maintenance or a course for new homeowners.
- Training environmental science students at a local community college to carry out sampling of yards for lead contamination. Students would be trained in how to draw plot plans, how to take samples, and how to interpret and write up the results, as well as in health and safety issues surrounding the handling of lead-contaminated soil. This would substantially reduce sampling costs, while providing an educational experience for the students concerned.
- Involving youth volunteers from a program such as City Year in carrying out the construction and landscaping work for lead-safe yards. City Year, a program of AmeriCorps (the domestic Peace Corps), engages young people aged 17 to 24 in youth development, human services, public health, and environmental programs. Another option would be to contract with a training and construction program such as Youth Build. Youth Build is a youth and community development program that offers job training, education, counseling, and leadership development opportunities to unemployed and out-of-school young adults, aged 16 to 24, through the construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing in their own communities.