

Western Pennsylvania's Guide to Good Health



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Featured Article

Do You Know What Is In Your Soil?

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Land formerly used for farming or affected by past industrial activities is now being used to build large residential developments, schools and playgrounds. When land is converted from agricultural or industrial use to residential use, it's common to find traces of petroleum based chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, lead and arsenic in the soil. These chemicals should be addressed by environmental professionals but are typically overlooked by homeowners and land developers. These oversights can lead to hidden health risks.

The Mahfood Group LLC, an environmental consulting firm located in Bridgeville, PA initiated The Healthy Roots Project in 2007. This project promotes education and awareness of the sources and nature of contamination that may be present because of industrial impacts or the use of pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides in farming. The Mahfood Group's soil quality assessment and remediation services can identify the potential for risk, limit the potential for chemical exposure, create peace of mind and improve the resale value of properties. Performing these assessments prior to construction would be preferred as costs to evaluate a property will go up once the area is developed and the structure and landscape are established.

Older homes may be at risk because quite often lead-based paint was used on the exterior of these homes. Over the years, this paint would flake off due to harsh weather or was scraped off in order to apply a fresh look. The residue could have fallen in the soil and remained there.

Exposure to these types of contaminants can be especially hazardous to children, because their bodies are smaller and still developing. Also, children tend to spend a significant amount of time outdoors, resulting in greater opportunities for contact with potentially contaminated media like soil, surface water and sediment.

In addition to the Healthy Roots Project, The Mahfood Group offers environmental and management services for clients in a wide variety of industry segments. The Mahfood Group's mission is to bring together various environmental disciplines to perform "Green Development."

For more information on The Mahfood Group and the Healthy Roots Project, visit the website at www.thehealthyrootsproject.com or call (412) 221-5056.

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