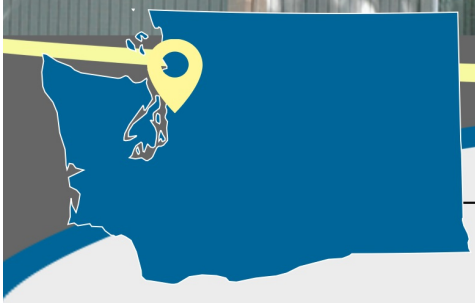
Photo by King County Housing Authority



Housing & Health on Vashon Island

The relationship between health and home is well-studied and widely-recognized: the health of our bodies depends on the health of our homes

Healthy housing is affordable, safe, and supportive

A healthy home is one where the physical, mental, and socioeconomic environment supports the well-being of household members. It is free from hazards like pests or structural deficiencies. It does not impose a cost burden, ensuring household income can be spent on other needs such as food and healthcare.

It should be possible for every Vashon resident to live in a healthy home.

Affordable

Less than 30% of household income is spent on housing, ensuring there is enough for healthy food, health care, and other needs

Safe

Home is free from hazards such as toxins, pests, and structural problems

Supportive

Household members are supported in making healthy choices, achieving educational and economic success, and engaging with their community

Hallmarks of Healthy Housing

- Dry
- Pest-Free
- Contaminant-Free
- Ventilated
- Maintained
- Adequate plumbing & kitchen
- Not Crowded
- Affordable!

Healthy housing is critical to well-being

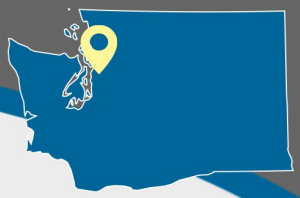
Research shows that affordable, healthy homes are positively correlated to physical and psychological well being.

Poor housing quality is the most consistent and strongest predictor of emotional and behavioral problems in children and youth

Households who spend less on housing are less likely to experience residential instability, which is associated with reduced mental and physical health outcomes

Residential exposures are major contributing factors to serious illnesses

Impacts of healthy housing barriers on Vashon



HUD's defined housing problems include overcrowding, inadequate plumbing, inadequate kitchen facilities, and cost-burden. The National Healthy Housing Standard (NHHS) builds on these to include structural integrity, safety & security, heating & energy, moisture, waste, pest management and chemical agents.

Injuries at home account for 4 million emergency department visits and 70,000 hospital admissions nationwide

Leaky, saggy roofs & broken windows cause mold, increasing the risk for asthma and other serious health problems

40% of childhood asthma cases are attributable to residential exposures

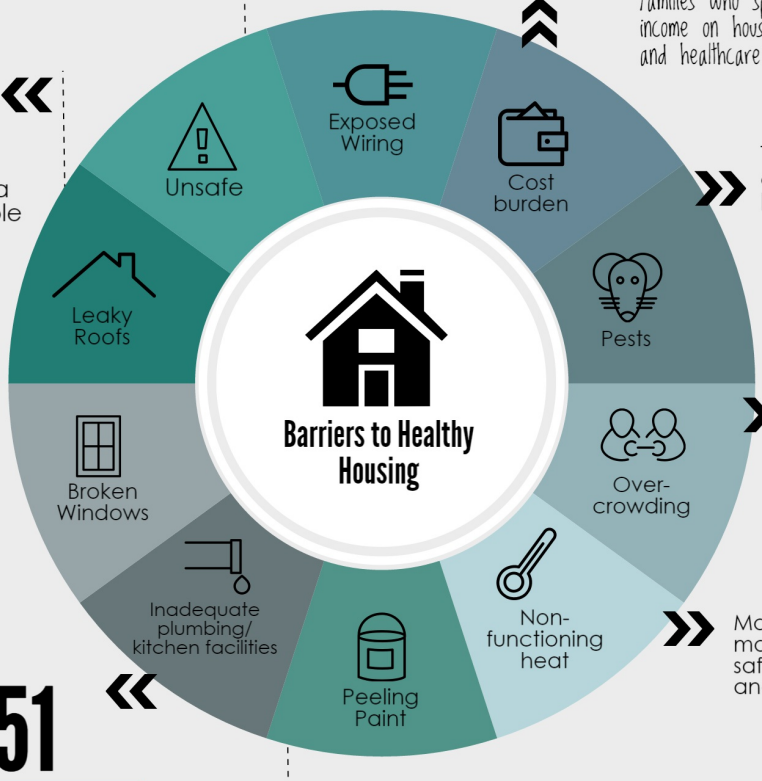
$2,584
Annual expenses for asthma related treatments per household

4.3 million
Days of lost productivity due to asthma in Washington adults
(that's 11,781 years!)

151
Vashon households have inadequate kitchen or plumbing facilities

More than **2 in 10**
households on Vashon are cost burdened

Families who spend less of their income on housing spend more on food and healthcare.



The presence of pests can increase the risk of hospitalization by up to: **3x**

42 Vashon households are over-crowded

Over-crowding is linked to higher rates of infectious disease transmission

Malfunctioning or poorly maintained HVAC systems pose safety and health risks including fire and exposure to carbon monoxide

61% of Vashon households have a risk of lead exposure

Lead at any level has toxic effects on the nervous system and cognitive development, especially in children.

$5,600
1 year of medical & special education for a seriously lead-poisoned child

Updated March 2017.

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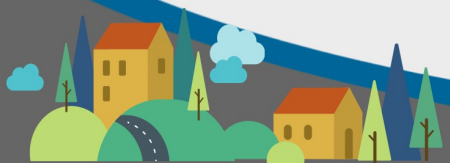

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