

## Why should I care?

The home you live in and the street you live on can affect your health. We want people across the U.S. to be able to live in a community where they can be safe and active throughout the day.

There are many hurdles to health in our homes and neighborhoods that we need to overcome:

- In Our Homes<sup>1</sup>
  - o Thirty-five million homes in America have at least one health or safety hazard.
  - o Over 24 million homes have lead-based paint hazards and put children at risk of lead poisoning.
  - o The presence of radon in homes causes 21,000 lung cancer deaths annually and is the top cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers.
  - o About 40 percent of asthma attacks are connected to preventable triggers, such as mold and rodents, inside people's homes. Children are particularly vulnerable: Every year, asthma among children leads to 2 million emergency room visits, 14 million missed school days and \$56 billion in costs.<sup>2</sup>
- In Our Neighborhoods
  - o During the first half of 2016, states reported 2,660 pedestrian deaths, an unfortunate uptick over the previous year.<sup>3</sup> Adults and children living in low-income communities and communities of color, where sidewalks and streets are more likely to be poorly maintained, face a much higher likelihood of pedestrian and bicyclist deaths.<sup>4</sup>
  - o More than half of Americans live in communities with unhealthy levels of ozone and particle pollution, raising their risk of premature death, respiratory complications and heart damage.<sup>5</sup>
  - o More than 54 million people in the U.S. live in low-income urban and rural areas that are far enough away from a grocery store that the area is designated as having "low access" to healthy food.<sup>6</sup>
  - o Every day in the U.S., 93 people die and 222 are injured due to gun violence. Seven American children and teens die every day due to gun-related violence and suicide.<sup>7</sup>

Yes, the statistics about the health of our communities can feel grim. But there are ways to design new neighborhoods and improve existing ones so they help keep us safe and healthy. And commonsense gun safety policies can save lives and prevent debilitating injuries.

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<sup>1</sup> APHA: National Healthy Housing Standard: <https://www.apha.org/publications-and-periodicals/reports-and-issue-briefs/healthy-housing-standard>

<sup>2</sup> Center for American Progress: <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/14065816/SafeAndHealthyHomes-report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Governors' Highway Safety Association: <https://www.ghsa.org/resources/spotlight-peds17>

<sup>4</sup> SRTS At the Intersection of Active Transportation and Equity: [http://saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/resource\\_files/at-the-intersection-of-active-transportation-and-equity.pdf](http://saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/at-the-intersection-of-active-transportation-and-equity.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> American Lung Association: [www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/sota/key-findings/](http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/sota/key-findings/)

<sup>6</sup> USDA Economic Research Service: [www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/documentation/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/documentation/)

<sup>7</sup> Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence: [www.bradycampaign.org/key-gun-violence-statistics](http://www.bradycampaign.org/key-gun-violence-statistics)

## What can I do?

Reducing exposure to radon can impact the number of lung cancer deaths. **Contact a certified inspector to have your home tested for radon.**

Gun violence takes the lives of more than 30,000 Americans every year.<sup>8</sup> [Tell your members of Congress you demand they vote for commonsense measures to prevent gun violence.](#)

Designing roads that are friendly to cyclists and pedestrians will make our communities both safer and healthier, but it is just a start. Visit [APHA's Healthy Community Design page](#) for resources that can help you influence the health of your community. **Ask your local officials to build streets that are safe for all users.**

You can also use the power of the purse to make a difference in your community. **Support farmers markets and local businesses that value health** like stores that sell affordable healthy food and choose not to sell tobacco.

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8 JAMA: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2595514>



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