

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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County Honors Vets' Service With Free Training *"Program Enhances Employment Opportunities"*

In honor of our local Veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan Oneida County's *Lead Primary Prevention (LLP) Program* will make available two Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) training slots at no cost to returning vets seeking employment in construction, County Executive Anthony J. Picente, Jr. announced today.

"While area Veterans were protecting our freedoms and performing nation building tasks in Iraq and Afghanistan, there have been changes in Federal EPA regulations that could impact their employment in construction once they return to civilian life," Picente said. *"Through our partnership with Mohawk Valley Community College, the County's LLP program has been working to increase the pool of Certified Renovators capable of performing work on our aged infrastructure in a lead safe manner compliant with the new EPA regulations. Providing the opportunity for two Veterans to be trained in lead-safe work practices at no cost to them is the least we can do to honor their service."*

Under new EPA regulations that went into effect on April 22, 2010, contractors and renovators working on pre-1978 built housing must receive training and be certified in lead-safe work practices. Those found to be non-compliant are subject to fines of up to \$37,000 per day. The 8-hour Renovator certification classes require a pre-paid \$195 fee which will be waived for two Veterans who apply.

Dr. Gayle D. Jones, Director of Health, says it is essential that anyone who disturbs lead-based paints in pre-1978 housing be certified in lead-safe work practices. The Oneida County Health Department, through its Lead Primary Prevention Program, and in partnership with MVCC offers the training each month at both the Utica and Rome campuses. The classes are taught in both English and Spanish.

"We're pleased in joining with County Executive Picente in assisting local Veterans in obtaining the EPA Certified Renovator training through MVCC," Jones said.

Veterans interested in registering for the Renovators Training class should contact Sgt. Vincent Scalise of the Utica Center for Development at **765-0975** no later than December 1, 2010.

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