

Neighborhood Soil Testing

for concerned residents near
Durham's Contaminated Parks



Bring a soil sample in a Ziplock plastic bag, and we will screen it for lead!

East End Soil Shop

Saturday, March 14, from 3–5 pm

101 S. Driver Street (Communities in Partnership)

Lead and other contaminants have been found at unsafe levels at five parks. Our partners will be there to share info on:

Health risks and ways to reduce exposure during play and gardening.

Park contamination testing results to date.

The city's next steps and possibilities for remediation.



To sign up for info about events, scan code.

Parking available along the street, and at Maureen Joy Charter School, and across the street at Shepherd's House United Methodist.

Collecting a Soil Sample

Step 1:

Identify an area of interest for your soil sample.

Step 2:

Collect Soil – For a large area, collect soil from 5–10 random spots in that area, and combine in a clean container. For a small area, collect soil from 3 random spots and combine in a clean container. (See table below for sampling depth per spot.)

Step 3:

Mix soil well in clean container.

Step 4:

Remove pebbles, rocks, and roots, and air dry. Do not use a flame, oven or hairdryer to dry the soil!

Step 5:

Transfer 1 – 2 cups of the mixed soil into a clean one-quart Ziplock bag.

Note: For more than one sample, repeat steps 1–5.

Rinse your container between samples. Wear gloves.

Area of Interest	Sampling Depth for Each Random Spot (inches)
Garden Area	Collect soil from the surface down to 6–8 inches deep
Play Area / non-garden area	Collect all soil from the surface down to 1–2 inches deep

Soil samples will be screened via a technique called X-ray fluorescence (XRF) for presence of lead and some other contaminants that may be present. Please note that homeowners may be required by law to disclose the results of this testing. Participants may choose to receive the results of their sample, or they may opt to submit an anonymized sample and receive back a snapshot of neighborhood results without details specific to any home address.

