

National Weatherization Day Spotlight

The Scruggs Family 2420 Woodbrook Avenue

The Scruggs story is one of a Baltimore family that would have been left to live in an unhealthy and unsafe home if it was not for the collaborative spirit of a growing group of government, non-profit and private organizations keen on reshaping the way housing and health services can be streamlined to effectively meet the multifaceted needs of Baltimore communities.

Mr. Scruggs is a 58-year old homeowner who has lived in his Baltimore row home for the past ten years with his wife. His three teenage children live in the home along with their one-year old grandson who stays at the house daily. A ten-year veteran of the Department of Public Works in Sanitation, Mr. Scruggs had to retire six-year ago on disability, after being injured on the job. His wife, also suffering from a disability, was unable to work too.

On very limited income with three children to provide for, Mr. Scruggs struggled to maintain a safe and healthy environment for his family. Due to roofing problems and lead paint hazards in the home, the Scruggs family would not have been able to receive weatherization or energy conservation assistance

Rather than deny the case and walk away, the Baltimore City Weatherization Assistance Program made a referral to the City's LIGHT Project, a public private partnership funded by the Constellation Energy Group. The LIGHT Coordinator visited the home and assessed the family's needs and how agencies could cooperatively meet those needs. After identifying chipping and peeling paint along the windows and doors and high levels of lead dust, the LIGHT Coordinator connected Mr. Scruggs with Baltimore Housing's Lead Abatement Program. The Lead Abatement Program replaced windows and doors and made the house lead safe for Mr. Scruggs' grandchild. The Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning is providing post-remediation education and services to the family.

Baltimore Housing's Office of Rehabilitation Services was then brought in to replace the leaking roof with an energy-efficient white roof through a no-interest deferred loan. The roof repairs and case coordination were funded through an innovative \$1 million grant from the Constellation Energy Foundation. The grant also provides heating system replacements for houses receiving green and healthy home improvements.

With the roof completed and the lead paint hazards abated, Mr. Scruggs was now eligible to receive a full treatment of energy conservation services from the Baltimore City Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). WAP contracted with Living Classrooms, a non-profit agency providing employment training to disadvantaged Baltimore City residents, for the air sealing, insulation and weather stripping that will

save the Scruggs' family an estimated 30% on monthly utility bills. Coldspring HVAC, a Baltimore-based minority-owned business, served the household's furnace.

Finally, recognizing Mr. and Mrs. Scruggs' disabilities, the Office of Rehabilitation Services will be providing loan funding to renovate their second floor bathroom to make it more accessible. Rebuilding Together Baltimore, a non-profit serving seniors and disabled homeowners, will provide fall and injury prevention measures to prevent in-home falls and injuries.

On May 18, 2011, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake signed the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) Compact confirming Baltimore City's commitment to further coordinated public non-profit, and private partnerships to make as many houses in Baltimore City as possible – greener, healthier, and more sustainable. GHHI is a national pilot program funded by HUD in Baltimore, and more than a dozen cities around the country, with leadership provided by the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning. The Baltimore Community Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the Abell Foundation are active participants in Baltimore's GHHI program along with numerous government and non-profit agencies.

Through a systematic effort to coordinate services through public-private partnerships, the Scruggs family is now able to live in a safe, energy-efficient and healthy house. The comfort and security that Mr. Scruggs now has, knowing he can now maintain a stable home for his family, is priceless.