

Senior Citizens and Immigrants Who Struggle With Utility Cost

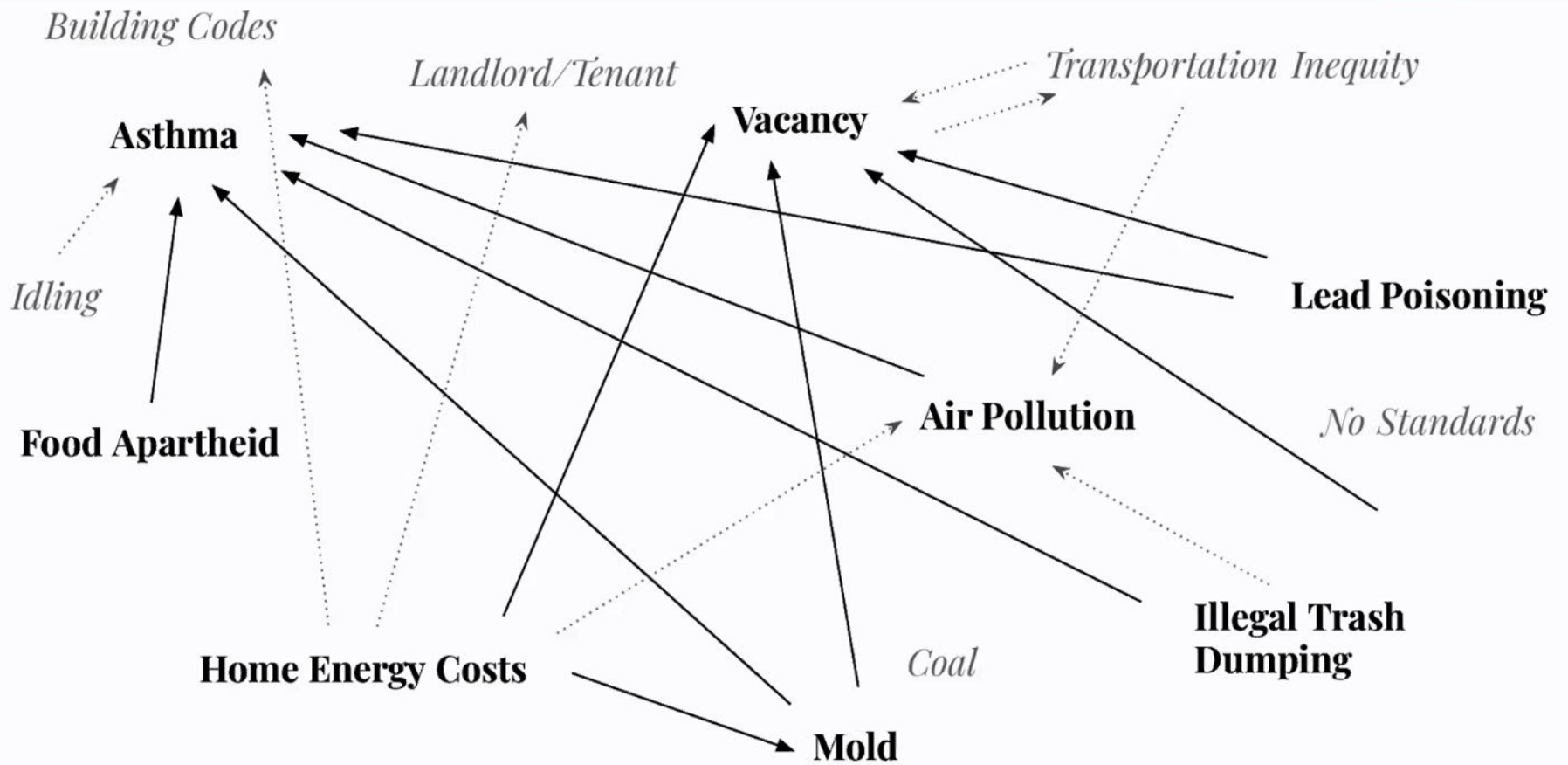


ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM IN ST. LOUIS

Summary

- ▶ Energy Burdens: Black households' burdens far exceed citywide median.
- ▶ Food Apartheid: Black residents twice as likely to have limited access to healthy food.
- ▶ Illegal Dumping: Most dumping occurs in majority-black neighborhoods.
- ▶ Vacancy: More than 90 percent of vacant properties in majority-black neighborhoods





Funding

Team Four Report

Most senior citizens live on a fixed income and the Utility increases could affect how they live their lives. Many have to choose Utility bills or necessities each month and normally will choose to pay rent, that's going up as well. Many choose rent over Utilities because shelter is often better than being warm or having lights. In some cases if the individual chooses to pay utilities instead of rent they still could face homelessness due to nonpayment of rent when living in subsidized housing. So yes the utility increase contributes to the struggle keeping community housed. Many individuals have no family nor anywhere else to go.

How Can You Help?

1. Focus on low-income multifamily properties.

We know from utility energy efficiency programs and the Weatherization program, often overlook MF buildings, because they're hard to retrofit. Yet, residents of older MF buildings are often the ones who are paying the highest utility bills and who need the rebates the most.

Problem: low-income multifamily housing providers face multiple barriers to implementing comprehensive energy efficiency retrofits. When projects do get done, it can take up to 24 months to set up 8,9, even 10 funding sources in the capital stack.

2. Create a 20% set aside of IRA rebates for low-income multifamily buildings

Without a set-aside, IRA rebates may get used up by Low to Moderate Income single family households that can access funds more quickly.

Problem: Affordable multifamily housing staff are already stretched too thin just operating and maintaining their properties.

Solutions:

1. Provide one-stop shop technical assistance to affordable multifamily housing providers

2. Provide Technical Assistance to help Identify and streamline additional sources of funding, conducting an energy audit, developing scopes of work, hiring and overseeing contractors, conducting quality assurance oversight of the work.

Problem: Multifamily housing providers have very thin operating budgets. Often don't have funds for upfront costs – like design and development costs, electrification feasibility studies,

3. Provide upfront pre-development funds to affordable multifamily housing providers

4. Align rebates with state's housing finance agency programs

Affordable MF housing providers most often finance energy upgrades when refinancing their debt, when they can fold the cost of energy efficiency improvements into new mortgages.

Incorporating these rebates—especially the whole house HOMES rebate—at the time of refinance can yield deeper, more comprehensive improvements.

5. Require extended affordability

To ensure that residents benefit from these investments, require MF property owners to ensure or extend the affordability covenant of the property for an additional 10 - 15 years.