



# HOME SICK:

## Uncovering the health harms in Homes of America's manufactured housing communities

### Manufactured Housing in Michigan: A crucial source of affordable housing

- Michigan ranks 2nd in investor-ownership of manufactured housing communities in the country.<sup>1,2</sup>
- These communities are a crucial source of affordable housing for hundreds of thousands of Michigan residents with low or fixed incomes, including immigrants, families with children, seniors, and people with disabilities.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Alden Global Capital, a hedge fund, initiated a massive buyup of manufactured housing communities through its affiliate company, Homes of America LLC, beginning in 2022. About 12% of Homes of America properties are located in Michigan.<sup>2,5</sup>
- Residents living in Homes of America communities have described rent hikes, displacement through evictions, and delayed or ignored maintenance requests, according to research and media investigations.<sup>5</sup>

## New research finds health harms in investor-owned communities

Manufactured Housing Action and Human Impact Partners researched the health impacts of unhealthy conditions in Homes of America LLC owned parks across the country, including in Michigan. The research, based on **in-depth interviews with 20 residents** and **housing code inspections from 10 communities**, documents unhealthy housing conditions in Homes of America owned communities. Residents described **mental and physical health harms they attributed to their housing conditions, including gastrointestinal issues, respiratory health symptoms, infections, and injuries**. Read the full report here: [HOME SICK: Uncovering the health harms in Homes of America's manufactured housing communities](#).

# Key Findings

- **Poor drinking water quality:** Several communities were found in violation of water standards by regulatory agencies, and contaminants like lead and bacteria were discovered, which can contribute to residents' gastrointestinal health, skin issues, and infections.<sup>6</sup>

Between 2022 and 2024, Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) cited Homes of America communities for violating drinking water standards:

- An Homes of America employee received a letter describing a violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act at **North Morris Estates** for lack of adequate water supply, and failing to have water system safety and emergency preparedness plans. The community's water supply also tested positive for the presence of radioactive elements.<sup>7-9</sup>
- Water sample tested positive for coliforms (bacteria) at **River Grove Mobile Home Park**.<sup>10,11</sup>
- Homes of America employees received notice of failure to submit plans to prevent cross contamination and back flow from non potable sources of water for **Baltimore Terrace**.<sup>12</sup> EGLE requested that Baltimore Terrace not get recommended for licensure.<sup>13,14</sup>

- **Water shutoffs:** Some communities experienced water shutoffs lasting hours to days or weeks. Residents reported experiencing stress and disruptions in the ability to perform daily tasks like personal hygiene, cooking, using medical devices and childcare.

In November 2022, **River Grove Mobile Home Park** experienced a water shut off for nearly 2 weeks.<sup>15</sup>

- **Water and sewage infrastructure failures:** Several communities experienced water line breaks and leaks that led to standing water, mold growth, and home damage, possibly contributing to respiratory health issues. Presence of mold has been associated with asthma symptoms, including asthma-related hospitalizations in children.<sup>16</sup>

In 2022, EGLE inspection corroborated **River Grove Mobile Home Park** residents' concerns regarding main and multiple service line leaks, broken water mains, flooding, and sewage discharge.<sup>17,18</sup> EGLE also found that water from the community was directly spilling into the nearby St. Joseph River, creating potential environmental impacts.<sup>19</sup>

- **Vacant homes and debris:** Unoccupied homes and trash created safety hazards and attracted pests and rodents. The emptiness of their neighborhoods heightened residents' feelings of isolation and loneliness.

In March 2023, code enforcement personnel inspecting **North Morris Estates** identified 25 lots that required demolition and over 20 that had specific issues, including with homes' skirting, porches, roofs, and windows.<sup>20</sup>

- **Broken and barricaded roads:** Poor road and infrastructure maintenance has likely increased risks and injuries from trips and falls, particularly among elderly residents.

Code enforcement identified pot holes in roadways in front of 14 lots around September 2023 at **River Grove Mobile Home Park**.<sup>21</sup> In February 2024, the local township supervisor of **North Morris Estates** expressed concern over mobile homes impeding the roads; local fire department personnel confirmed that the homes hindered emergency services from getting through.<sup>22</sup>

- **Overgrown trees and brush:** Overgrown vegetation fostered mosquito infestations and likely exacerbated allergies. Some residents also reported trees puncturing or falling through their roofs.

*They [property management] took our maintenance away. They have not mowed in months. I have bad allergies. Our grass is up to our knees. They got dirt piles all over...I'm on two inhalers all year long now, and an allergy pill...I was only on one [pill] when the grass was down.*

**Sandra Smith,**  
Resident of North Morris Estates, Mt. Morris, Michigan

- **Neglected community amenities:** Amenities like swimming pools and clubhouses in several communities have been closed, which residents say has limited opportunities for exercise, socializing with neighbors, building trust, and combating loneliness.<sup>23,24</sup>

*When we lost our clubhouse, we lost the pool, I think it took away us being able to get out and exercise. ... We haven't been connecting, really, since we quit gathering at the clubhouse, because we were getting out there and getting to know each other... I met my two friends out there.*

**Martie,**  
Resident of North Morris Estates, Mt. Morris, Michigan

- **Additional hazardous living conditions among renters:** Renters described habitability issues in their homes like nonfunctional appliances, heating and air conditioning issues, leaks and mold growth, and structurally unsound walls and floors, which likely worsened food insecurity, respiratory health, and mental health. Research on poor housing quality links low and high indoor temperatures with an increased risk for respiratory conditions, high blood pressure, cognitive difficulty, mental health disorders, and infections.<sup>25,26</sup>

Jenny and her four young children have lived in a rented manufactured home in **River Grove Mobile Home Park** for over five years. Since Homes of America took over management, she said that her family has faced ongoing housing instability and unsafe living conditions, including an incident where her daughter tripped and fell through the hole in the living room floor. Without a working heater for over a year, the family has had to share a bedroom during the winter. Jenny believes her family is experiencing prolonged illnesses due to mold exposure.

Homes of America residents want what we all want: **safe, affordable, and stable homes** where they are treated with dignity and respect. Holding Homes of America accountable to these basic healthy housing standards will require bold action to build resident power and curtail corporate greed. Policymakers at all levels of government have a critical opportunity to pass and enforce the following policies to combat unchecked corporate power and keep residents safe, healthy, and housed.

## Policy Recommendations

- **Strengthen housing standards to keep residents safe in their homes:** Pass and enforce strong housing standards like licensing requirements, regular inspections, and accountability mechanisms to ensure homes are safe and habitable
- **Protect residents from exploitation:** Pass rent regulations, good-cause eviction policies, and prohibit retaliation and unfair or discriminatory practices
- **Promote and resource community-friendly ownership:** Provide funding and pass policies that enable residents to transition from corporate to community-friendly models of ownership
- **Address the root cause by limiting corporate speculation:** Enact protective zoning regulations, impose portfolio caps, divest tax-payer resources, and increase taxes on speculative investments to deter corporate profiteering

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