

Lead in Construction

Week Number 47 (November 19 - 25) 2017 Edition

Summary Statement: Brief description of the hazards associated with lead exposure, how to avoid exposure and protect yourself.

Lead is a common hazardous element found at many construction sites. Lead exposure comes from inhaling fumes and dust, and lead can be ingested when hands are contaminated by lead dust. Lead can be taken home on workers' clothes, skin, hair, tools and vehicles.

Lead exposure may take place in demolition, salvage, removal, encapsulation, renovation and cleanup activities.

Avoid Exposure

- Use proper personal protective equipment (e.g., gloves, clothing and approved respirators).
- Wash hands and face after work and before eating.
- Never enter eating areas wearing protective equipment.
- Launder clothing daily; use proper cleaning methods.
- Be alert to symptoms of lead exposure (e.g., severe abdominal pain, headaches, loss of motor coordination).

Use Respirators

- Wear appropriate respirators as directed.
- Conduct a user seal check each time a respirator is donned.
- Be aware of your company's respiratory protection program; understand the limitations and potential hazards of respirators.

Prevent Further Exposure

- Ensure adequate ventilation.
- When outdoors, stand upwind of any plume.
- Use Dust collecting equipment, when possible.
- Use lead-free materials and chemicals.
- Use wet methods to decrease dust.
- Use local exhaust ventilation for enclosed work areas.

Questions

1. When is lead paint a hazard?
2. How can you protect yourself from being harmed by lead in paint?