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Weekly Safety Meeting

Lead Hazards

Workers involved in the renovation, repair, tear down, and disposal of damaged or destroyed structures and materials can often encounter materials that contain lead. Repair, renovation, and demolition operations often generate dangerous airborne concentrations of lead, which is a metal that can cause damage to the nervous system, kidneys, blood forming organs, and reproductive system, if inhaled or ingested in a dangerous quantity. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has developed regulations designed to protect workers during activities that might include lead exposure.

How Exposure to Lead Can Occur

Lead is an ingredient in thousands of products. Such products include: lead-based paints, lead solder, electrical fillings and conduits, tank linings, plumbing fixtures, and many metal alloys.

Many uses of lead have been banned. However, lead-based paints continue to be used on many surfaces such as bridges and other structures, railways, and ships. The reason is lead-based paints are rust and corrosion resistant, inhibiting rust from occurring.

In the past, many homes we're painted with lead-based paints. So, lead exposures can also occur when that lead-based paint is removed from surfaces in those homes.

There are operations that can generate lead dust and fumes. They include demolition of structures, flame torch cutting, welding, use of heat guns, sanders, scrapers, or grinders to remove lead paint, and abrasive blasting of steel structures.

OSHA Regulations on Worker Exposure to Lead

Employers in the construction industry must comply with OSHA regulations when workers are involved in the repair, renovation, removal, demolition, and salvage of flood damaged structures and materials. They are also responsible for developing and implementing a worker protection program in accordance with Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1926.62. This program is in place to help minimize worker risk to lead exposure. Employers must be in compliance with OSHA's Lead standard at all times, even though their projects may vary greatly in scope and potential for exposing workers to lead and other hazards.

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OSHA's Lead Standard Highlights:

- OSHA has established a permissible exposure limit (PEL) of 50 micrograms of lead per cubic meter of air, as averaged over an 8-hour timeframe.
- Adults with levels of lead in their blood above 30ug/dL should be seen by a doctor. Some harmful effects of lead are permanent.
- Employers should test workplace air for lead and blood lead levels in workers.
- Employers should tell workers if their work involves lead and train workers on lead safety.
- Employers should give workers a place to wash hands and take a shower.
- Employers are required to use engineering controls and work practices, where feasible, to reduce worker exposure.
- Employers should provide workers a place to change into clean clothes. Work clothes should be kept away from street clothes.
- Employees are required to observe and practice good personal hygiene, such as washing hands often, especially before eating and taking a shower at the end of a work shift, before leaving the work site.
- Employees should change out of work clothes and shoes before going home.
- Employees should not take contaminated work clothing or shoes exposed to lead home. If you must, put them in a plastic bag and wash your work clothes separately.
- Employees are required to be provided with protective clothing and, where necessary, with respiratory protection in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.134.
- Employees exposed to high levels of lead are required to enroll in a medical surveillance program.
- Employees should tell their doctors that they work with lead.

References include Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1926.62, OSHA Quick Card, and OSHA Fact Sheet.

LEAD IS DANGEROUS…KNOW THE RISKS!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests