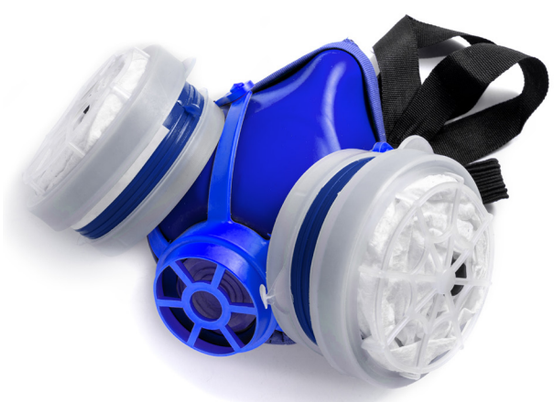
If I work with lead, can lead harm my family?

Yes, you may carry lead dust in your vehicle or home on your work clothes, shoes or areas of the body not covered by protective clothing such as hands or hair. Lead can harm the health of others in your home, especially children. If a pregnant woman is exposed to lead, it may harm her unborn child.

How can I protect myself?

- Do not eat, drink or smoke in the work area. Wash your hands and face before eating to avoid swallowing lead dust.
- Wear a properly fitted respirator.
- Keep the work area clean. Do not dry sweep; wet cleaning is safer.



How can I protect my family?

Don't take toxic lead dust home with you!

- Use separate work clothes and shoes/boots while at work.
- Shower and take off your work clothes and shoes before going home or getting into your vehicle.
- If you can't shower at work, take a shower and wash your hair as soon as you get home.
- Put dirty work clothes in a plastic bag.
- If you wash your own work clothes, wash them separately from those of other family members. Run the empty washing machine again to rinse out the lead.
- If you have a hobby or work with lead, keep children and pregnant women out of the work area.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have questions about lead exposure at work, call the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at **(971) 673-0440** or visit our Web site at **www.healthoregon.org/lead.**

If you think your employer is violating any Lead Standards requirements, you can make a complaint to Oregon OSHA at **(800) 922-2689.**

You can request that your name be kept confidential.

Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Oregon Health Authority
800 NE Oregon St., Suite 640
Portland, OR 97232
971-673-0440
1-800-368-5060 (toll-free)
www.healthoregon.org/lead
leadprogram@dhsoha.state.or.us

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at **(971) 673-0440.** or email **community.outreach@dhsoha.state.or.us**. We accept all relay calls or you can dial **711**.

Oregon Health Authority

OHA 8155 (rev-1/2021)

Working with Lead:

Learn how to protect your health

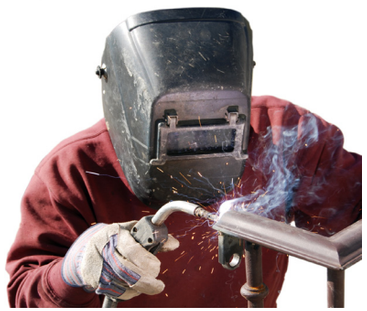
Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

How do I know if I am at risk for lead exposure?

Many jobs involve exposure to lead, including:

- Renovation, remodeling and paint preparation of homes or buildings built before 1978
- Demolition of old structures
- Steel bridge maintenance
- Welding, burning and torching of old painted metal
- Use of marine paints
- Battery manufacturing/recycling
- Lead production or smelting
- Brass, copper, and lead foundries
- Lead fishing weight production
- Working with lead alloys
- Radiator manufacturing and repair
- Scrap metal handling
- Lead soldering
- Indoor firing ranges
- Ceramic glaze mixing.

There are many other jobs where lead can be dangerous. Ask your employer if you work with lead and check the safety data sheets (SDSs) for materials you work with.



You can also be exposed to lead if you have these hobbies:

- Making fishing sinkers or bullets
- Shooting in indoor firing ranges
- Home remodeling/renovation
- Car or boat repair
- Glazing/making pottery
- Furniture refinishing
- Making stained glass
- Soldering or welding.

How does lead enter the body?

Lead can enter your body in two ways:

- You can breathe in lead dust or fumes.
- You can swallow lead dust if it gets on your hands or face, food, beverages or tobacco products.

What health problems are caused by lead?

Lead is a powerful poison that stays in your body for a long time. It is absorbed into your blood and can build up in your organs and bones. Too much lead in your body can cause serious and permanent damage to a number of organ systems in your body. Extreme cases of lead poisoning can result in coma, convulsions, or death.

Lead exposure can cause:

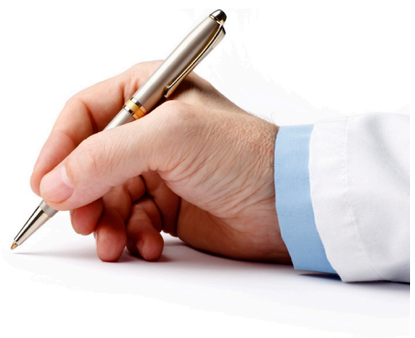
- Lowered sex drive
- Infertility and abnormal sperm
- High blood pressure
- Damaged blood cells
- Kidney impairment
- Vision and hearing problems
- Brain damage.

How can I tell if I have been exposed to lead?

Many people with high lead levels do not feel sick or poisoned. These high lead levels can still cause health problems.

The only way to know if you have been exposed to lead is to have a simple blood test that measures how much lead is in your blood stream. If your blood lead level is **10 micrograms** of lead per deciliter of blood (µg/dl) or above, you will receive information on how to reduce lead exposure to you and your family from the **Oregon Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.**

No amount of lead is completely safe. However, the more lead you are exposed to, the more serious the damage may be. The good news is that lead poisoning can be prevented.



If I work with lead what are my employer sresponsibilities?

Under federal and state regulations (Lead Standards for General Industry and Construction), employers have a responsibility to ensure that workers are protected from harmful lead exposure.

Your employer must provide you with the following:

A safe workplace: All employers in lead-using industries must monitor the air in the workplace in order to determine whether workers are exposed to hazardous levels of lead. Employers are required to limit exposure through dust and fume collection systems and other forms of "engineering controls."

Medical monitoring: If lead in the workplace air is above 30 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m3) of air (called the Action Level) averaged over an 8-hour period, the employer must inform workers of the result. They must also provide a free medical exam including regular blood lead tests.

Protective equipment: Employers must provide employees with free protective equipment and training if lead in the air is greater than 50 $\mu g/m^3$ (called the Permissible Exposure Limit).

Medical removal protection: If you have a high blood lead test, you should be transferred to a job that doesn't expose you to lead until you can return to your regular job. You should not lose pay or benefits while you are in the temporary position.