

List lead hazards on site

Explain dangers

Exposure to lead is most common among plumbers, welders, painters, and demolition workers.

You're most at risk when there's lead dust, fume, or vapour in the air.

For instance, when you're

- working with lead and metals containing lead such as solder
- applying or removing paints containing lead
- installing or removing sheet metal containing lead
- hot cutting on material containing lead
- renovating, demolishing, and doing other work on structures or material containing lead
- removing mortar from stone walls.

Lead gets into your body mainly through

- inhalation (breathing in dusts, mists, and fumes)
- ingestion (eating, drinking, smoking, biting nails, etc., without first washing your hands and face).

Symptoms of overexposure include

- headaches
- fatigue

- irritability
- pains in joints and muscles
- abdominal pain
- constipation.

Severe lead poisoning may cause much more serious symptoms such as kidney, nerve, and brain damage. It has also caused miscarriages and stillbirths in pregnant women and reduced sperm count in men.

Identify controls

- Your employer must inform you about any lead on site. That's the law. If you're unsure, or suspect that there's lead where you weren't warned about it, tell your employer.
- If you're welding, cutting, burning, or heating products containing lead, make sure you have local exhaust ventilation.
- Use dust-collection systems on power tools that can generate lead-containing dust.
- Wear respirators and protective clothing. Protective clothing includes coveralls, gloves, and eye protection such as safety glasses, goggles, or face shields.
- Never take protective clothing home for washing or cleaning. You could poison your family.
- Practice a high standard of personal hygiene—wash up thoroughly after each exposure to lead. Wash and shower at the end of a shift.
- Eat, drink, and smoke only in places free from lead contamination
- Get rid of any lead waste at the end of each day or shift in an appropriate manner.

Demonstrate

Show and explain lead control measures on the project.