



# Safety Matters

Talking Points for Supervisors

## Working Safely with Lead

Lead is a cumulative and persistent toxic substance that poses a serious health risk. When you work with lead, it accumulates on your clothing and skin in the form of dust. It can also be inhaled or ingested in the form of fumes, and can damage the lungs, kidneys, nervous system, intestines and reproductive system.

We go to great lengths to ensure your safety but you need to do your part, too. If you are working with lead, it is very important that you rigorously practice basic personal hygiene to minimize your health risks. In addition to minimizing your exposure, good hygiene practices also prevent you from taking lead-contaminated dust out of the worksite and into your home where it can affect your family's health, too.

### Good Hygiene Practices

You should always take the following safety precautions when working with lead.

- Do not smoke, eat, drink or put on cosmetics in contaminated work areas or while wearing contaminated clothing. You will be at a higher risk of ingesting dust when doing these activities.
- Remove contaminated clothing at work, and shower before getting into your car and returning home. You do not want to transport any lead from your body or clothing into your home and affect your family's health.
- Be careful around open flames and lead dust clouds. They are flammable under certain circumstances.
- Wear the appropriate PPE at all times.
- Avoid generating dust by using the correct tools to open containers. If you use the wrong tool and cause an uneven tear, spills and dust are likely.
- Keep your workspace clean and clutter-free.
- Do not use materials that are incompatible with lead such as oxidizing agents, strong acids and strong bases.
- Once materials are taken out of their original manufacturer's container, do not attempt to put them back in.
- Open containers only on stable surfaces.
- Follow the handling precautions found on the company's Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
- Have clean-up and fire-fighting equipment ready at a moment's notice in case of emergency.
- Do not dry sweep spills containing lead because this will cause dust. Instead, wet down the area with water and then vacuum the area with a HEPA vacuum.
- Always wear a respirator when you are cleaning up materials.
- If you experience an illness after working with lead, report it immediately to your supervisor.

You can work with lead safely, but you must always practice basic personal hygiene to minimize your exposure.

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"Solutions you can understand"

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