

APRIL

SAFETY TALK

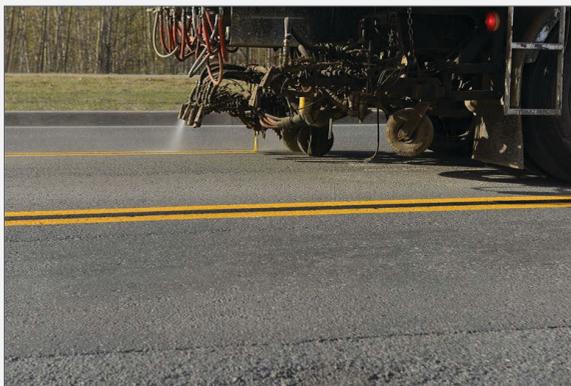
How is this for a scary thought: There is no known level of lead exposure that is considered safe.

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There are many pathways for lead exposure. It can be inhaled in dust or fumes, or ingested through contaminated hands, food, water, cigarettes or clothing. If on your clothes, you could take it home to your family.

Where is lead?

- Water pipes
- Solder
- Metal sheeting
- Batteries
- Road paint
- Exterior paint
- Imported children's toys
- Crystal



STILL TRYING TO... GET THE LEAD OUT!

Knowing where lead could be, and how you could be exposed, are important steps in determining how to prevent exposure.

Lead was extensively used in paint as it wears well, creates bright pigments, and dries quickly.

Lead has been present in water since the invention of plumbing. It is stable and malleable, making it possible to bend pipes to the desired shape. It was also used extensively in the solder used to join pipes.

Lead is still used on metal surfaces of products which could be imported into Canada. It's also in lead crystal, and can leach into the product in the glass, particularly if it is there for a period of time. (The advice is: drink from it but don't decant your wine into a crystal decanter)

In Canada, lead was banned as an acceptable material in pipes in 1975, and as a solder in 1986. It was banned as a residential interior paint in 1976, but it is still not entirely banned in industrial or exterior paints. So, buildings built before 1986 likely contain lead in the pipes, and if before 1978, in the interior paint. All buildings could have lead on the exterior.

How could municipal employees be exposed in their work? As a municipal employee, if you are on the roads crews, you could be exposed to lead through existing road marking paint. If you need to burn or grind existing lines off the roads, you should assume the paint contains lead.

If you are required to sand walls or windows, assume the paint contains lead. Likewise, if you have to sand metal for any reason, assume it has a lead coating. If you are replacing plumbing, assume existing pipes contain lead.



In every instance of potential exposure to lead, conduct a risk assessment and establish effective controls to eliminate exposure.

Talk to your Safety Advisor or Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee about safe work procedures and suitable respiratory, eye and skin protection. And don't take contaminated clothing home to your family.