



Wilkins Safety Group

H & S Guidance - Lead

INTRODUCTION

The **Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002** apply to all work which exposes persons to lead in any form such that it may be ingested, inhaled or otherwise absorbed. Inhalation is the major source of absorption, therefore many of the regulations are orientated towards preventing the inhalation of lead dust, fume and vapour. An approved Code of Practice (ACOP) entitled "Control of Lead at Work" has also been issued.

Examples of the type of activity or process in the local authority enforced sector where exposure to lead could occur are vehicle exhaust fitting, battery repair/breaking, (indoor) shooting ranges and petrol pump attendants. Exposure levels will probably only be low.

Lead poisoning can give symptoms of loss of appetite, constipation, anaemia, headaches, muscular and joint pains, colic and encephalopathy.

CONTROL OF LEAD AT WORK (REGULATIONS AND ACoP)

- The key to the Regulations is a requirement on the employer to assess the nature and extent of the exposure to lead so that, on the basis of that assessment, he may determine the extent of the measures which will be adequate to control the exposure and comply with the Regulations. Where there is 'significant' exposure (Para 10 of the ACOP) to lead all the Regulations will apply, but below this level only some of the Regulations will apply.
- The basic measure to protect employees from absorbing lead is the prevention of the escape of lead dust, fume or vapour into the workplace.
- Personal hygiene has an important role in controlling lead absorption, thus the provision and use of adequate washing facilities is a basic requirement. Food and drink should not be consumed in any place liable to be contaminated by lead - adequate, alternative arrangements should be made.



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- Employees should be given adequate information and training regarding hazards, precautions and duties under the Regulations.

LOCAL AUTHORITY - ENFORCED PREMISES

Where it is likely that exposure levels to lead will be low, compliance will entail:-

- (i) assessment of the exposure level,
- (ii) informing the workforce of the results of the assessment, precautions to be taken etc.
- (iii) maintaining a good standard of washing facilities and personal cleanliness.

Prevention or minimisation of exposure to lead could be achieved, for example, by:-

- (i) use of cold chisels in preference to cutting torches in exhaust vehicle fitting premises.
- (ii) batteries to be returned to supplier or recognised 'salvage' operator i.e. no breakage or repair to take place on the premises.
- (iii) minimisation of exposure to leaded fuel (at delivery or dispensing)
- (iv) observance of precautions for shooting ranges contained in HELA LAC 47/4. (Lead in air at shooting ranges etc. . .)

CHECKLIST - LEAD

1. Do any activities at your premises involve any exposure to lead in any form? YES/NO
2. If yes, have you assessed the exposure level? YES/NO
3. Have you consequently determined the extent of any measures needed to control the exposure and comply with the Lead at Work Regulations 2002 ? YES/NO
4. Have you informed the workforce of the results of your assessment and any necessary actions/precautions? YES/NO
5. Do you provide and maintain a good standard of washing facilities and promote a high standard of personal cleanliness? YES/NO



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REFERENCES/FURTHER DETAILS

- *1. Approved Code of Practice (COP 3) - Control of lead at work (HSE) ISBN 0-7176256256.
- *2. Lead and You : A Guide to working safely with lead.(rev.ed.) HSE. ISBN 0717615235