

Written by Jeremy Eggers
Tuesday, 16 June 2009 07:42

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) office in Kansas City today announced a special regional emphasis program aimed at reducing occupational exposure to lead, one of the leading causes of workplace illnesses, for workplaces under OSHA's jurisdiction in the Midwestern states of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

The potential for lead exposure depends on the industry, but generally speaking, lead is an ingredient in thousands of products widely used, including lead-based paints, lead solder, electrical fittings and conduits, tank linings and plumbing fixtures.

Some common operations that can generate lead dust and fumes include demolition operations; flame-torch cutting; welding; use of heat guns, sanders, scrapers, or grinders to remove lead paint; and abrasive blasting of steel structures.

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“Occupational exposure to lead continues to be one of the most prevalent overexposures found throughout industry,” said Charles E. Adkins, OSHA’s regional administrator in Kansas City. “It is imperative we do all we can to reduce that exposure to workers. This special regional emphasis program will serve to amplify OSHA’s commitment to ensuring the safety and health of workers in all occupations.”

This program will set targeted inspections in industries or workplaces where there is a potential for lead exposure, and also will cover complaints and referrals regarding lead exposure.

Lead is a potent, systemic poison that serves no known useful function once absorbed by the body. It is well-documented that lead adversely affects numerous body systems – including damage to blood-forming, nervous, urinary and reproductive systems – and causes forms of health impairment and disease that can arise from acute or chronic exposure.

For more information on OSHA’s lead standards, visit <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/lead> .

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace for their employees. OSHA’s role is to promote the safety and health of America’s working men and women by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual process

U.S. Department of Labor's OSHA launches regional emphasis program to reduce lead exposure in the w

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improvement in workplace safety and health.

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