



ILPPWA Facebook Posts from Hazelwood North Action Group



Facebook posts by Hazelwood North Action Group and Maggie Jones, posted in **No Lead Smelter In Hazelwood North Facebook Group** at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1752026121602331/>

October 25 – 31, 2020. Each year in the USA, **National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week** (NLPPW) is a call to bring together individuals, organizations, industry, and state, tribal, and local governments to increase **lead poisoning prevention awareness** in an effort to reduce childhood exposure to **lead**.

Lead Paint Hazards

Paint containing lead was used in many Australian homes prior to 1997, but those built more recently may also present a risk to your health. Exposure to lead is a health hazard. Even small amounts of dust or chips of paint containing lead can be a health risk. Anyone painting a house or doing maintenance that could disturb paint containing lead should avoid exposing themselves and their families, neighbours and pets to its hazards.

There is information for do-it-yourself renovators on the risks associated with paint containing lead and on practical steps to keep those risks as low as possible. Ideally, homes with paint containing lead should be assessed and remediated by trained professionals.

Lead in House paint Australian Government – Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. <https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead/lead-in-house-paint>

Find a Lead Qualified local painter

<https://painters.edu.au/search-painters/VIC-Melbourne-Geelong-Ballarat/>

Lead Alert: The 6 step guide to painting your home.

<https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/e9ddd00e-8914-4d57-8279-19b3d2616dee/files/lead-paint-fifth-edition.pdf>

Managing lead-based paint removal - Worksafe Victoria

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/managing-lead-based-paint-removal>



Lead-based paint warning for DIY Victorians - Health.Vic

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/media-centre/MediaReleases/lead-based-paint-warning-for-diy-victorians>

More about Lead - Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead>

Lead in automotive paint

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead/lead-in-auto-paints>

Lead in marine paints

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead/lead-in-marine-paints>



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Lead in recreation activities and hobbies

Lead in recreational activities

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead/lead-in-recreational-activities>

Lead in automotive paint

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead/lead-in-auto-paints>

Lead in marine paints

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead/lead-in-marine-paints>

Lead in ceramic crockery and pottery-making

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead/lead-in-ceramic->



[crocery-pottery-making](#)

Lead in stained glass

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead/lead-in-stained-glass>

More about Lead

<https://www.environment.gov.au/protection/chemicals-management/lead>



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Lead Risk Work

Lead-risk work is work performed in a lead process that is reasonably likely to cause an employee's blood lead level to exceed levels specified in the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (OHS Regulations).

Employers at workplaces where lead processes are carried out have legal duties under the OHS Regulations. Additional duties apply if employees are undertaking lead-risk work.

Worksafe Victoria

Are you performing lead-risk work?

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/are-you-performing-lead-risk-work>

Lead-risk work: Notification of work – Worksafe Victoria

What it is and how to notify WorkSafe

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/lead-risk-work-notification-work>

Working with lead - handling lead powder compounds: A health and safety solution

How to reduce or eliminate the workplace health and safety risks when handling lead powder compounds.



<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/working-lead-handling-lead-powder-compounds-health-and-safety-solution>

Managing lead-based paint removal

How to reduce or eliminate the health and safety risks of lead-based paint.

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/managing-lead-based-paint-removal>

Lead: A guidebook for workplaces

Information about complying with duties associated with lead work and controlling risks of lead exposure in the workplace.

<https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-06/ISBN-Lead-guidebook-for-workplaces-2020-06.pdf>

Lead: Safety basics

Understand the health effects of lead and find guidance for managing lead risks in the workplace.

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/lead-safety-basics>

Reducing the risks of working with lead

Employers at workplaces where lead processes are carried out are being urged to follow updated guidance as a new lead exposure standard and monitoring requirements come into force tomorrow.

<https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-06/ISBN-Lead-guidebook-for-workplaces-2020-06.pdf>

Lead at work: Legal duties

Part 4.3 of the OHS Regulations 2017 imposes specific legal responsibilities on employers and employees at workplaces where a lead process is...

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/lead-work-legal-duties>

Lead - report of medical examination

Employers can complete this form for medical practitioners before an employee undertakes a lead risk medical examination.

<https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/ISBN-Lead-report-of-medical-examination-conduct-medical-examinations-2017-06.pdf>

Working with lead – radiator repair: A health and safety solution

How to reduce or eliminate the workplace health and safety risks of working with lead to repair radiators.

<https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/ISBN-Working-with-lead-radiator-repair-2017-06.pdf>



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General Lead and Human Health information

Health.vic - Lead and Human Health

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/lead>

Vic Govt. Better Health Channel - Lead exposure and your health

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Lead-exposure-and-your-health>

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Summary

- Lead is a metal that may be found in the home or work environment.
- Lead exposure can impair intellectual development and damage the brain if levels are high enough.
- All children should have their exposure to lead minimised.
- Children under five years of age are at greatest risk of the health effects of lead.
- All women should minimise their exposure to lead both before and during pregnancy and when breastfeeding.
- See your doctor to request a blood test for lead if you are concerned.
- The best way to prevent lead exposure is to remove or protect yourself and others from known or suspected lead sources.



Lead is a naturally occurring metal. It is used in industry and, in the past, was added to petrol and household paints.

Lead is not required for human health and can be hazardous when taken into the body by swallowing or breathing in lead or materials contaminated with lead. Once in the body, lead circulates in the blood and can be stored in the bones.

The health effects from exposure to lead will depend on a variety of factors such as a person's age, the amount of lead they are exposed to and for how long, and if they have other health conditions.

Young children, including unborn babies, are at greatest risk of the health effects of lead exposure. Children are most often exposed to lead by swallowing items or soil containing lead or breathing in dust containing lead. Adults are most often exposed to lead if they work in a job which involves lead-based activities.

Lead exposure sources in Australia

In Australia the most common source of lead exposure is at [workplaces involving the use of lead](#) compounds. Workers can also sometimes bring lead residues into their home on their work clothes, skin, hair and equipment after contact with lead.

Other sources of lead exposure exist in Australia include:

- lead paint – used in many Australian homes prior to 1997; those built more recently may also have paint containing lead. Lead is still used in paint and surface finishes of cars and boats. Flaking or peeling paint, or renovation activities, may generate dust or chips of paint containing lead which can then be inhaled by adults or inhaled or eaten by children
- hobbies which involve the use of lead – such as home renovations or restoration of old cars or furniture, lead-lighting, pottery using lead glazes, making or handling lead sinkers used for fishing, recreational gun shooting (including casting bullets and shooting at a pistol range)
- air may become polluted with lead from copper and lead smelters, however there are no such smelters in Victoria. Vehicle battery works, iron and steel production and soldering using lead can produce small amounts of lead in the air. In early 2002, leaded petrol for cars was phased out in Australia
- high lead levels in soil can be caused by some industrial and mining activities. In areas with a history of high traffic flow, roadside soil may still contain lead deposited from traffic fumes prior to the removal of lead from petrol
- household dust may contain lead from a number of sources – including deteriorating lead-based house paints, contaminated soil or dust brought into the house
- drinking water can contain small amounts of lead. The solder or fittings of some older pipes may contain lead which can dissolve into water that may be sitting in these pipes
- traditional and alternative medicines, usually sourced overseas, have been found to contain high levels of lead – cases of lead poisoning as a result of taking Ayurvedic treatments imported from India have been reported in Victoria
- some imported traditional cosmetics and applications, including eye liner manufactured in Pakistan and some other Asian, African or Middle-Eastern countries, have been found to contain high levels of lead
- illicit opium has been found to contain high levels of lead – cases of lead poisoning as a result of smoking or swallowing illicit opium originating from overseas have been reported in Victoria



- old toys (for example, painted items or metal cars and toy soldiers) may contain high levels of lead – Australian standards restrict the amount of lead in painted toys. However, some imported toys have presented a risk. Also, very old cots or second-hand painted cots may contain unsafe levels of lead in the paintwork
- foods stored in pewter, lead crystal glassware or pottery containing lead-based glazing may become contaminated with lead. Imported cans from specialty stores with irregularly soldered side seams may contain high levels of lead. Legislation restricts lead levels in Australian foods. Eating animals hunted using lead shot may also cause lead exposure
- metal objects such as jewellery, old coins, medals and curtain weights may contain lead.

The Department of Health and Human Services (Victoria) [Environment Section](#) can provide advice about lead sources in the home and how to manage them safely (Tel. [1300 761 874](tel:1300761874)).

Young children and lead exposure

Lead exposure can permanently damage the brain and impair intellectual development. For children the risk of exposure to lead and the health effects of exposure can depend on their environment, stage of development or behaviours. Children under five years of age are especially vulnerable to lead exposure because:

- they frequently put their hands, and held objects, to their mouth
- they absorb and retain more lead from their gut and airways than adults do
- their developing brains are more sensitive to the effects of lead.

Children with [pica](#) – a behaviour that leads to eating non-food substances such as peeling paint flakes, soil or small objects – are also at an increased risk of lead exposure.

Children are particularly at risk during home redecorating or renovating, as they may pick up or swallow paint chips or dust.

Unborn babies are also at risk, since lead swallowed by the pregnant mother readily passes through the placenta. Breastfeeding mothers can also pass on lead to their infants via their breast milk.

Symptoms of lead exposure

Lead exposure can affect people differently, and symptoms often depend on the type of exposure. Some children or adults may not have any symptoms at all.

Acute lead poisoning is usually caused by a recent exposure to a high amount of lead. The symptoms may include:

- muscle pains
- fatigue
- abdominal pains
- headache
- nausea and vomiting
- seizures
- coma.



If a person is exposed to smaller amounts of lead over a longer time period, chronic (long-term or ongoing) lead exposure may produce symptoms such as:

- irritability
- lack of energy
- loss of appetite
- learning disabilities
- behavioural problems
- poor school performance
- poor coordination
- impaired growth.

Many of these symptoms could be caused by other conditions, so it is important to see a doctor if you are worried.



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Getting tested for lead exposure

If you suspect that you or a member of your family has been exposed to lead, visit your doctor for further advice. They may recommend that you have a blood test to measure the amount of lead in your blood and determine whether you have been exposed to lead.

In Australia, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommends that if a person has a blood lead level greater than 5 µg/dL (micrograms per decilitre), the source of exposure should be investigated and reduced, particularly if the person is a child or pregnant woman.

Your doctor or paediatrician can advise you about avoiding exposure to lead. They may recommend monitoring your blood lead level(s) to assess the effectiveness of any action taken. If your blood lead levels are extremely high your doctor may recommend a treatment known as chelation therapy to rapidly decrease the amount of lead in your body.

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services will also receive a notification from the pathology laboratory and your doctor if your blood lead level is greater than 5 µg/dL. Someone from the department may contact you to help you understand the source of your lead exposure. This will help prevent further lead exposure to you and the people around you.

However



- While the government states that blood lead levels greater than 5 ug/dL should be investigated, the World Health Organisation and peer reviewed studies support “There is no level of exposure to lead that is known to be without harmful effects”.

WHO, Lead poisoning and health.

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/lead-poisoning-and-health#:~:text=There%20is%20no%20known%20safe,symptoms%20and%20effects%20also%20increases.>

Lead toxicity: an Australian perspective

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6372192/>

Preventing exposure to lead

If you think you or someone else may be in a situation where you are exposed to lead at home or work, you can reduce this exposure by:

- following appropriate safety regulations and practices at work and home if your job or hobby involves the use of lead. This includes using proper personal protective equipment and washing your hands with hot soapy water before eating or smoking. Do not bring home lead-contaminated clothing to wash with the household laundry
- taking care when redecorating or renovating your home to reduce the amount of lead dust and reduce disturbance to old paint surfaces. Pregnant or breastfeeding women and children under five should not be present in work areas during renovation activities
- seeking professional advice if you are unsure whether your home may contain lead paint. Consider using a professional contractor to repair homes likely to contain lead-based paint
- ensuring that children do not have access to peeling paint or chewable surfaces painted with lead-based paint, such as old toys, window sills and old furniture (including cots)
- discouraging children from playing in or eating dirt and from putting dirty fingers or toys in their mouth
- washing toys and dummies frequently, and washing children’s hands and faces before they eat or nap
- cleaning the house regularly and ensuring there is no build-up of dust or paint chips from peeling paint. Use wet cleaning methods for dusty floors, ledges, window sills and other flat surfaces to minimise the risk of lead-containing dust getting into the air
- consulting with your water supplier or council environmental health officer if you suspect your drinking water may contain lead
- avoiding storing food or drink in pewter, lead crystal or glazed pottery containers.

Where to get help

- Your [GP \(doctor\)](#)
- [Victorian Poisons Information Centre](#) Tel. [13 11 26](#) – for advice when poisoning or suspected poisoning occurs and poisoning prevention information (24 hours, 7 days)



- Department of Health and Human Services, [Environment Section](#) Tel. [1300 761 874](tel:1300761874) – for health advice about lead issues in the home or lead in your reticulated water supply
- [Worksafe Victoria](#) Tel. [1800 136 089](tel:1800136089) – for health advice about lead in your workplace
- [Environment Protection Authority Victoria](#) Tel. [1300 372 842](tel:1300372842) – for advice on safe ways to dispose of lead materials, advice about pollution from lead industries and contaminated land.

[Lead Safe World by The LEAD Group \(charity\) – LEAD Group Kits for environmental testing and testing eggs.](#)

<https://leadsafeworld.com/solutions/lead-group-diy-sampling-lab-analysis-lead-test-kits/>



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Lead in drinking water

Health.Vic - Lead in drinking water from some plumbing products

[https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/A12B57E41EC9F326CA257BF0001F9E7D/\\$File/Lead-plumbing-products-Guidance-Statement-July2018.pdf](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/A12B57E41EC9F326CA257BF0001F9E7D/$File/Lead-plumbing-products-Guidance-Statement-July2018.pdf)

Lead Group - Lead in drinking water in Australia

<https://lead.org.au/lanv8n1/l8v1-11.html>

Lead safe world - Make your home and yard lead safe

<https://leadsafeworld.com/solutions/make-home-yard-lead-safe/>

Lead safe world - Lead safety for roofers and rainwater users

<https://leadsafeworld.com/solutions/lead-safety-for-roofers-and-rainwater-users/>

Information from Gippsland Water:



Gippsland Water publishes an annual drinking water quality report on our website each year that contains water quality test results.

This is available from early November each year for the previous financial year.

<https://www.gippswater.com.au/residential/about-us/governance/corporate-documents/annual-reports>

There is a section for corporate reports then a section for the drinking water (Safe Drinking Water Act) reports.

The Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) health guideline value for lead in drinking water is 0.01 mg/L. Gippsland Water's drinking water supply is regularly tested for lead which has been equal to or less than 0.001 mg/L in the 2018/19 report. We are finalising the 2019/20 report, which has similar results. This is at least 10 times lower than the ADWG guidelines.

Lead can occur in air and dust, which can get into rainwater tanks if there is significant contamination in the area. This can also be from renovations in houses that have old lead paint.

Here is a link from DHHS on lead paint.

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/media-centre/MediaReleases/lead-based-paint-warning-for-diy-victorians>

Some household plumbing fittings have been seen to release lead into drinking water.

Link to the Department of Health and Human Services webpage

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/water/drinking-water-in-victoria/drinking-water-public-health>

Using water in homes, buildings and public places

In the home

Reticulated drinking water coming into homes and buildings is managed under the safe drinking water regulatory framework. In some cases water can sit in internal plumbing for extended periods of time, typically overnight or after holidays. This stagnancy may increase the likelihood of metals that are present in some plumbing products, such as copper and lead, leaching or dissolving from them. For example, lead can dissolve into drinking water from some brass plumbing fittings and copper can dissolve into drinking water from copper pipes. Fittings such as sinks and shower bases can be stained blue or brown by water. This is generally a reflection of the type of internal plumbing material present (for example, copper pipes or galvanised iron). Hot water systems may contain more dissolved minerals and metals due to the heating process.

Householders can proactively reduce their potential exposure to metals in drinking water through the following measures:

- using water from cold taps only for drinking, food preparation and cooking*
- flushing cold water taps used for drinking and cooking for about 30 seconds first thing in the morning to draw fresh water through the tap*
- flushing cold water taps used for drinking and cooking for about 2-3 minutes after long periods of non-use, such as return from holidays; this 'flushed' water can be collected and used for washing up, watering plants or other non-drinking uses.*

Do not drink water that tastes, smells or appears different; you should contact your water supplier for advice.

Other exposures to lead are included on the following webpage



<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Lead-exposure-and-your-health>

Water Filters

The standard for water filters that have been tested and shown to reduce contaminants such as lead is NSF 53. NOTE that they only reduce contaminants by a certain percentage, not remove them completely, and need to be changed after a period of use.

NSF/ANSI 53

Filters are certified to reduce a contaminant with a health effect. Health effects are set in this standard as regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Health Canada. Both standards 42 and 53 cover adsorption/filtration which is a process that occurs when liquid, gas or dissolved/suspended matter adheres to the surface of, or in the pores of, an adsorbent media. Carbon filters are an example of this type of product.

The NSF website is below, which includes all manufacturer's products that they have tested.

https://info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/listings_leadreduction.asp

If you are buying a water filter, make sure that the NSF logo and "NSF 53" is included on the filter, and that it is designed to remove lead (these can also be called heavy metals filters). Some filters are designed for some specific contaminations and not for lead.

They should also have NSF 42 or "Watermark" on them which means that the product has been tested for use in drinking water systems.

[Editor's note: The LEAD Group has found that even "Watermark" taps and pumps which include leaded brass components can add significant amounts of lead to water when new, but rather than filtering lead out of the water, The LEAD Group recommends stainless steel taps and pumps, and testing the water for lead before drinking it, so that you know whether you need to locate the source/s and stop lead getting into the water.]



Videos

Impact of toxins on the developing brain

<http://littlethingsmatter.ca/2018/02/13/the-impact-of-toxins-on-the-developing-brain/>

Crime of the century

<http://littlethingsmatter.ca/2018/10/25/crime-of-the-century/>

Shifting the curve



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tjoh-9QN414&authuser=0>

Lead Paint Hazards (Australian)

<https://painters.edu.au/Consumer-Information/Lead-Paint-Hazards.htm>

Lead Safe Blitz

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q1zkvJGH1uA>

Additional websites

Health.vic - Lead and Human Health

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/lead>

Vic Govt. Better Health Channel - Lead exposure and your health

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/Lead-exposure-and-your-health>

National Health and Medical Council - NHMRC Information Paper: Evidence on the Effects of Lead on Human Health May 2015

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/lead-human-health-info-paper-eh58a.pdf>

The LEAD Group – has over 80 issues of their newsletter LEAD Action News, and nearly 100 fact sheets at:

<https://lead.org.au/>

Lead Safe World – a 2013 initiative of The LEAD Group including LEAD Kit sales and Lead Safe World Partnerships

<https://leadsafeworld.com/>

Volcano Art Prize – a 2012 initiative of The LEAD Group where children and adults can enter artworks, photos and short films about lead-safety and win Cash Prizes and Pictureproducts mugs printed with their entry image

<https://volcanoartprize.com/>