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Lead Paint Regulations: An Update of Best Practices

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Document ID	ASSE-03-722-1
Publisher	American Society of Safety Engineers
Source	ASSE Professional Development Conference and Exposition, 22-25 June, Denver, Colorado
Publication Date	2003

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INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1970's the Federal government has taken several steps to reduce worker and building occupant health risks due to exposure to LBP. Workers encounter lead-based paint (LBP) in a variety of occupational situations which require compliance with USEPA, OSHA

regulations and possibly HUD guidelines. LBP can be found in pre-1978 residential structures, on structural steel such as bridges and water towers, and other industrial surfaces primarily used for its durability or as a protective coating. Workers involved with the disturbance of LBP coatings risk exposure to lead fumes, dust, or paint chips. Inhalation or ingestion of lead can cause serious bodily harm and even death. Failure to utilize safe work practices during the disturbance of LBP coatings can have consequences resulting in lead exposures to other workers, non-workers and building occupants. Improper disturbance can also create environmental contamination and generate regulated hazardous wastes. This presentation will cover best practices utilizing the lead paint regulation and guidance issued by OSHA, USEPA, and HUD when LBP is disturbed during demolition and renovation activities.

History and response to health effects

Archaeologists have found lead pigment on buildings built around 3000 B.C. (*Anderson 4*). Even after 5000 years, the color on these structures is still visible. (*Mueller 33*) It is the durability of LBP to weathering and moisture that made it a common additive in paints for centuries. The health effects of lead exposure have also been known for centuries. As early as the 4th century B.C., Hippocrates observed leads adverse health effects on miners and metallurgists (ATSDR B- 1). Although the hazards have been recognized since ancient times, lead poisoning is still common in the United States.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 1 in 22 children in the United States have high levels of lead in their blood (*DEH 1*). The USEPA estimates 900,000 children under the age of 6 have blood lead level above the level of concern (*DEH 2*). The main source of lead poisoning in children is ingestion of lead dust or lead paint chips. To reduce children's exposure to lead, renovation and rehab work in pre-1977 residential housing must minimize the disturbance of LBP and ensure the proper cleaning prior to reoccupancy by children. HUD and USEPA have developed regulations and guidance for abating LBP hazards and conducting safe work activities when disturbing LBP in various types of residential properties ranging from large public housing apartments to private single family homes. These "safe work practices" will be discussed later.

File Size 187 KB **Number of Pages** 13

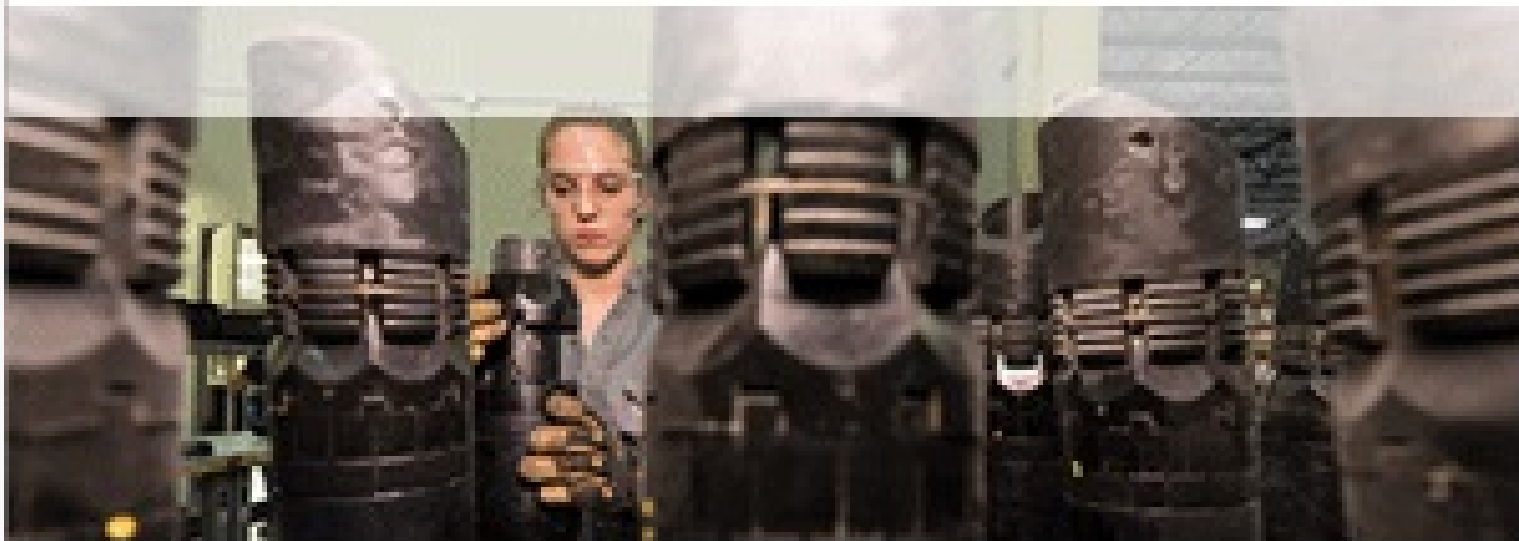
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