

## Is Lead A Concern in My House?

Lead is a heavy, bluish-gray metal that has a low melting point. It occurs naturally in the Earth's crust. The largest use for lead is in storage batteries in cars and has been used as an additive in leaded gasoline to increase octane rating, lead-based paints, lead-based solder in food cans and water pipes, fishing equipment, and ammunition.

With the advance of science and medical knowledge, lead is now known to be a health hazard, exposure to which can produce a wide range of adverse health effects. Both adults and children can suffer from the effects of lead poisoning. There are many ways in which humans are exposed to lead: through deteriorating paint, household dust, bare soil, air, drinking water, food, ceramics, home remedies, hair dyes and other cosmetics.

### HOUSING AREA

Continuous sampling and monitoring of lead has been conducted in the housing and Navy Sembawang area since 2003. No lead was found in the drinking water or drinking fountains. Some lead based paint has been found on metal railings, clothing line support poles and some paint waste.

What are some simple steps to take to prevent or reduce lead exposure?

- **Maintain the paint in your home and clean up any dust.** Whenever cleaning potential lead-contaminated dust, vigorous wiping is most effective in removing the lead. However, wiping should never be done in a back-and-forth manner, but rather from left to right (or vice-versa), or from the top of a wall downwards.
- **Eat right.** The amount of lead the human body retains can be reduced if you make sure your diet includes plenty of foods that contain iron, calcium and zinc.
- **Check your ceramic ware.** Some pottery may contain lead that can leach into food and drinks. Avoid eating off any colorfully painted ceramic plates, and avoid drinking from any ceramic mugs unless you know they do not leach lead.
- **Do not store alcohol in crystal containers.** Crystal decanters and glasses are often made with lead. When an acidic substance or alcohol is left in these containers for longer than just a few hours, there is a risk that the lead could leach into the liquid.
- **Wash Frequently.** Wash children's hands and faces often to remove dirt and/or potential lead dusts.

### IF YOU HAVE ADDITIONAL CONCERNS OR WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION....

Please contact Regional Safety at 6750-2535 or Environmental at 6750-2052.