

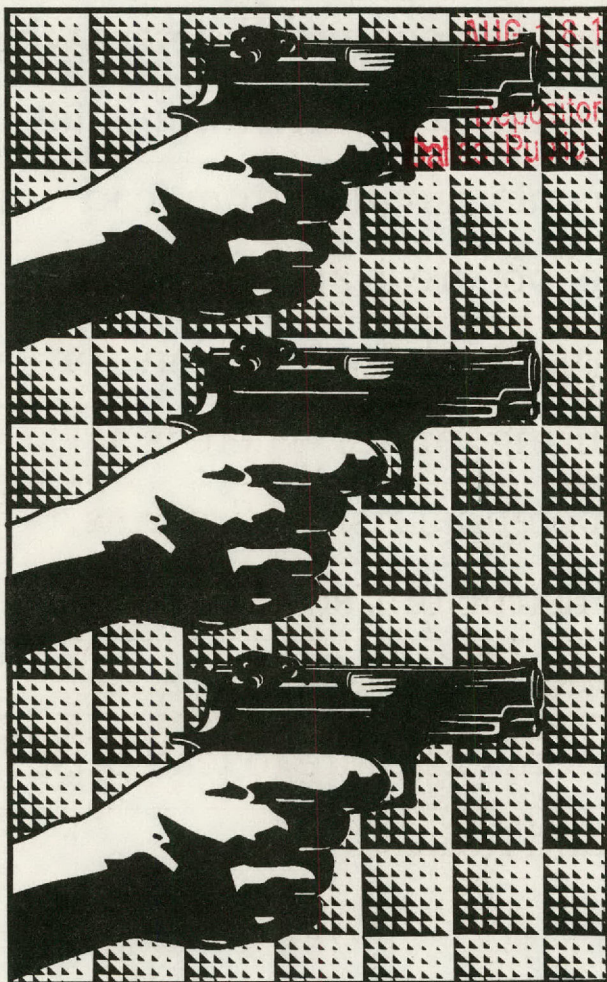
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FIRING RANGES

The Airborne Lead Dust Hazard

Shooter's Guide

Government Publications
Texas State Documents



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THE AIRBORNE LEAD DUST HAZARD

Protecting the health of range employees and shooters while minimizing environmental contamination from lead exposure is an important part of the safety plan for firing ranges. There is a potential risk to firearms instructors, shooters, and others at the firing range from exposure to lead dust and fumes.

HEALTH EFFECTS

Lead is a strong poison that serves no useful purpose once absorbed by the body. Lead dust can be inhaled or ingested.

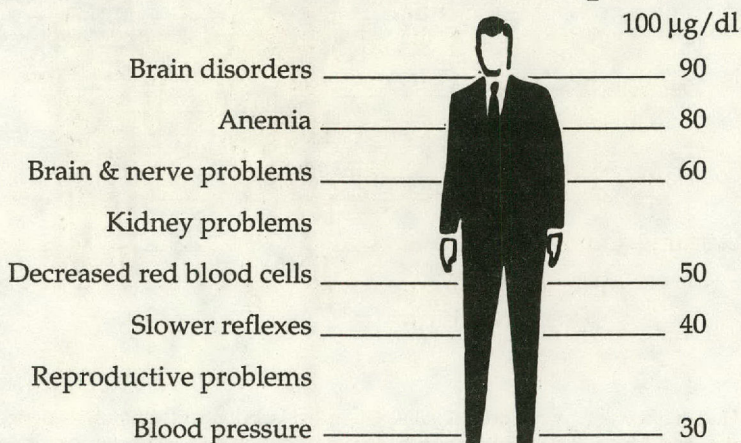
It can adversely affect:
the brain and nervous system,
the ability to make blood,
the digestive system,
the kidneys, and
the reproductive system.

Adults can absorb lead at work or from hobbies by breathing in lead dust and fumes.

Adults also can swallow lead accidentally by eating, drinking, or smoking in contaminated areas or by not washing their hands and faces after being in a contaminated area.

Lead dust from work or hobbies can be carried into the home on clothes, shoes, or other objects.

Health Effects in Adults - Lead Exposure



Health effects begin at approximately these levels, but not everyone experiences them.

HEALTH EFFECTS

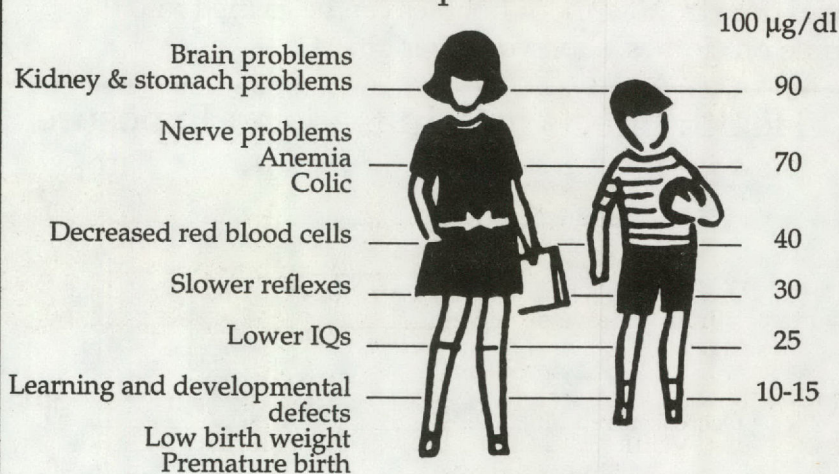
Lead poisoning in children, especially children under 6 years of age, is of special concern.

A young child's developing brain nervous system, and other organs can be damaged by even small amounts of lead.

Children's toys and other things they handle can become contaminated when parents bring lead dust home on shoes, clothes and other objects.







Lead absorbed by children can cause a wide range of problems, including learning disabilities and stunted growth.

Health Effects in Children & Fetuses Lead Exposure



Health effects begin at approximately these levels, but not all children experience them.

LEAD DUST IN A FIRING RANGE

-  Exploding primers containing lead styphnate and the friction from the lead slug against the gun barrel create airborne lead.
-  High lead dust levels can accumulate inside indoor ranges with inadequate ventilation.
-  Slugs hitting the bullet trap, walls, floors, or ceiling of the range also creates lead dust.
-  Airborne lead dust can concentrate in outdoor ranges, depending on weather conditions.
-  Spent bullets and settled dust can contaminate both indoor and outdoor ranges.
-  Improperly cleaning the range also can cause settled dust to become airborne.

YOU CAN TAKE IT HOME WITH YOU!

High levels of lead dust in firing ranges can settle on your body, and your hair, as well as on your clothes and shoes.

This dust can be carried to your car and house, where it can present a hazard to your children.

OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT MAY EXPOSE YOU & YOUR FAMILY TO HIGH LEVELS OF LEAD DUST



Bullet loading can create a fine dust that is very hard to remove. Melting lead to cast bullets produces a fume, which condenses into tiny dust particles that can remain in the air for up to 10 hours. The fine dust from these activities is readily inhaled and can contaminate household surfaces.

NEVER load bullets or melt lead inside your home, in places where children may frequent, or in an unventilated area.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF & YOUR FAMILY

- Ask about the ventilation at your range by checking with your rangemaster.
- At the range, wash your hands and face before eating, drinking or smoking
- Wash up before leaving the range.
- Wash your range clothes separately from the rest of your family's clothes.
- Always load bullets in a ventilated area.
- Do not load bullets in your home or in areas where children frequent.
- Do not allow children into your bullet loading area.
- Keep your bullet loading area clean by using a high-phosphate detergent.

For more information on lead exposure and firing ranges, health effects of lead, or other ways your family may be exposed to lead, please write or call:

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- Epidemiology Division
Texas Department of Health
1100 W. 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756
(512) 458-7269
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- Your local city or county health department
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- Statewide Poison Control Center
1-800-392-8548
-
- North Central Texas Poison Control Center
1-800-441-0040
-

Texas Department of Health
Epidemiology Division
1100 W. 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756-9987

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