**Lead Safety**

**What is Lead?**
Pure lead is a heavy metal at room temperature and pressure and is a basic chemical element. It can combine with various other substances to form numerous lead compounds. One common use of lead compounds was in paint products used for durability and pigment (color) characteristics.

**Exposure to Lead can be hazardous to your health**
Exposure to lead can occur in a variety of ways, including melting pure lead to use in glazing, molding, soldering, removal or encapsulation of lead or lead containing products (e.g., paint). This can include the alteration, repair, or removal of structures that contain lead or lead surface coatings.

Lead can be absorbed into your body by **inhalation** (breathing lead dust or fumes) and **ingestion**. Lead (except for some organic lead compounds) is not absorbed through the skin. When lead is scattered in the air as a dust, fume, or mist it can be inhaled and absorbed through your lungs and upper respiratory tract. Inhalation of airborne lead is generally the most important source of occupational lead absorption.

Always check the [MSDS Index](#) at the [EHS web site](#) to determine if the material you will be working with contains lead.

**Example:** OATEY 50/50 SOLID WIRE SOLDER (50% Lead)
Yellow TY13 Super Stripe Traffic paint

**Potential lead exposure activities:**
Lead soldering
Campus buildings and/or resident hall paint removal
Demolition and renovation of buildings
Maintenance or repair of painted steel structures (hand rails, etc.)
Welding, torch cutting, scraping, grinding, or sandblasting painted metal objects

Protect yourself from potential lead exposures by knowing what you are working with. Contact EHS to arrange pre work assessments to determine if lead is present (painted surfaces to be disturbed)

If lead exposure is possible contact [EHS](#) for protection strategies.

Request lead exposure sampling from EHS for lead exposure jobs.

Wear appropriate PPE and use controls to minimize your exposure.