

# LEAD FACT SHEET

North Carolina Division of Public Health • Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch

## Chemical Information

- Naturally occurring.
- Bluish-gray metal.
- Toxic by ingestion and inhalation of dust or fume.
- Probable human carcinogen.
- Can be found in parts of the environment due to human activities such as burning fossil fuels, mining and manufacturing.
- Exposure can occur from water contamination from plumbing, lead paint in older homes, and certain candies, toys, and medicines from foreign countries.
- Exposure can also result from hobbies such as target shooting, ceramics, stained glass makings and melting lead for fishing weights.
- Used in battery production, ammunition, metals, and devices to shield X-rays, foundries, lead soldering, and certain manufacturing settings.

## Hazards Identification

### **Acute Exposure:**

- Can produce anorexia, constipation, abdominal pain, and vomiting.
- May cause muscle weakness with muscle and joint pain.

### **Chronic Exposure:**

- Has been associated with alterations in kidney function and anemia.
- Can cause hypertension.
- May also result in anxiety, depression, headache, tiredness, reproductive issues, and memory problems.
- Children may experience brain and nervous system damage, slowed growth and development and learning, behavior, hearing and speech problems.

## Stability & Reactivity

- Can react vigorously with oxidizing materials.
- Incompatible with sodium azide (NaN<sub>3</sub>) and zirconium.
- Reacts with hot concentrated nitric acid, and with boiling concentrated hydrochloric or sulfuric acid.

## Handling & Storage

- Avoid contact with oxidizers such as peroxides, chlorates, and nitrates.
- Avoid chemically active metals such as potassium, sodium, magnesium, and zinc.