HEALTH HAZARDS

This guideline provides safety precautions for handling and storage of lead (Pb). Lead is a neurotoxin, reproductive toxin, hematologic (blood) toxin, may cause cancer based on animal data, and can pose other significant health hazards if the material is not safely handled. For assistance or if you have exposure concerns, contact Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S), x3347.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE):

- Gloves must be worn when handling lead weights or lead-contaminated items.
- Store re-usable gloves that have been worn for handling lead in a labeled and sealed bag or container in a designated location. Do not use for any other work.
- Disposable gloves may also be worn and can be disposed with normal trash.

MINIMIZE EXPOSURE:

- Thoroughly wash hands, arms, and face after handling lead.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke in or around areas where lead is handled or stored.
- Prior to conducting any activities that could generate lead dust (e.g. grinding, sanding, cutting, melting, etc.), EH&S must be contacted to conduct an exposure assessment.

HANDLING AND STORAGE:

- Keep lead inventories to a minimum and routinely check for lead dust contamination. EH&S can assist with detection of lead surface contamination.
- Routinely decontaminate work surfaces to minimize lead surface contamination. In general, this can be safely done with a damp or moist towel. Avoid decontamination methods that can aerosolize lead dust, e.g., non-HEPA filtered vacuum, aggressive sweeping, etc.
- Post warning signs indicating lead storage areas. Contact EH&S for labels.
- Do not store unprotected lead outside, because it can become highly oxidized as evidenced by a whitish coating on surfaces of the lead. This oxidized material is easily removed and dispersed and can create potential exposure and environmental issues.
- Do not use lead weights as door stops.
- Transport and store lead in secondary containers to minimize the spreading of lead dust.
- Consider coating, wrapping, or otherwise protecting lead weights to minimize oxidation and exposures.

DISPOSAL:

- Disposal of highly oxidized lead weights and significantly contaminated PPE and other materials should be coordinated with EH&S.

Rev. 0, June 2009