



Safety Meeting Outline



SMO 09-1002

THERE MAY BE MORE IN YOUR COFFEE THAN YOU THINK

By SeaBright Insurance Loss Control

People working in ship repair and general construction have enormous appetites. After all, you work hard, super hard. When the clock strikes noon, many workers habitually “plop” down wherever they are at the time, and dig into their lunch box. BIG MISTAKE!

Construction sites have many hazards, most of which are readily apparent. Others are not so easily seen. For example, welding causes metal to vaporize into tiny droplets which float in the air. When you weld on coated surfaces, lead (which may be in the paint and/or coatings) can be released also. These lead particles may float in the air until they eventually attach themselves to something nearby. This includes your skin, clothing, disposable cup, soft drink container, water bottle, thermos, etc.

When you smoke and your fingers touch your lips, you transfer lead directly from the air, or from your fingers, into your body. This is also true of anti-chap lip balm or other skin care/cosmetic products. In addition, the same is true of eating or drinking, only more so because of the actual ingestion of the food and beverage.

Lead is one of the most toxic substances known to man. It was recognized very early in man’s experience to cause serious harm to the body’s systems, including the blood, urinary, reproductive and central nervous systems. It is particularly worth noting that lead may cause irreparable damage at very low levels before you even begin to feel any noticeable symptoms.

Airborne lead exposures come from other sources besides welding. Sandblasting can also cause lead levels to rise far above permissible levels, even if done outdoors. In this regard, sweeping spend sand can cause lead dust to become airborne, so you should wear an N-95 particulate filter in this case. Going one step further, you should control the dust by wetting the sand periodically while sweeping. Compressed air used in cleaning can blow lead off you clothing or off the floor and other work areas, into your breathing zone.

How do you protect yourself? Use good ventilation in confined space welding, or better yet use a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) for complete protection. Because lead within poorly ventilated areas can frequently rise well above permissible levels, half-face respirators may not afford adequate protection.

And before eating or drinking on a construction site, wash your hands and face. Do not leave coffee cups or other drinking containers where they can become contaminated with airborne lead. Do not lay food on unwashed surfaces. Don’t smoke, but if you do, wash your hands first, if possible. Keep your fingers away from your lips if you have been welding or if lead contamination could be present. In short, use good personal hygiene and common sense to protect yourself.

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SAFETY MEETING AGENDA

DEPARTMENT/JOB SITE: _____ MEETING DATE: _____

1. **Open Meeting & Present safety topic:** _____
2. Read minutes from previous meeting.
3. **Persons present:**

4. **Old Business** – Status of previous recommendations. Discuss pending old business if any.

5. **Accidents** – Discuss accidents and near misses that have occurred since the last meeting. Brief summary of accidents to date by number and type. Note any trends. Discuss corrective action taken, or needed. Concentrate on accident causes to make everyone more aware.

6. **Inspection Reports** – Report on findings and recommendations of any inspection reports made since last meeting.

7. **New Business** – Solicit employee suggestions. Discuss new procedures, changes to company safety policy, etc.

TIME MEETING STARTED: _____ TIME FINISHED: _____

MEETING CHAIRED BY: _____ TITLE: _____