



Fact Sheet

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control • www.scdhec.gov

Lead

What is it?

Lead (Pb) is a solid metal that can be found in the air in a dust-like form called particulate matter.

Where can it be found?

Lead can be found in many different places including:

- Leaded gas (which is no longer sold in the U.S.)
- Paint found in old houses and on some cars
- Smelters – which are used in metal refineries
- The manufacturing process of lead storage batteries
- Contaminated soil and dust

What are the health effects of lead?

- Brain and other nervous system damage, especially in children
- Digestive problems
- Reproductive system damage
- Kidney damage
- Learning disabilities in children

What are the environmental effects of lead?

- Can be harmful to wildlife
- Contaminated soil can damage plants

What can you do to protect yourself from lead poisoning?

- Don't disturb, handle, or eat paint chips.
- Wash your hands immediately after touching or handling dirt and never eat dirt.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/baq/AirPollutants/effects.asp>