



GLOBAL ALLIANCE TO ELIMINATE LEAD IN PAINTS

N° 1

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The International Conference on Chemicals Management at its second session (ICCM-2, Geneva, 11-15 May 2009) endorsed the establishment of a global partnership to promote the phase-out of the use of lead in paint as an important contribution to the implementation of paragraph 57 of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

The overall goal of the partnership, called the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead in Paints, is to prevent children's exposure to lead via paints containing lead and to minimize occupational exposures to lead in paint.

The broad objective is to phase out the manufacture and sale of paints containing lead and eventually to eliminate the risks from such paint.

The global alliance is a voluntary and collaborative relationship between various parties, whether governmental, non-governmental, public or private, in which all participants agree to work together systematically to attain the overall goal of phasing out the use of lead in paint.

The global alliance is open to Governments, intergovernmental organizations and representatives of civil society and the private sector that support the alliance goal. It is open also to any other entity or individual who agrees to work towards the goal of the alliance.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON THE ICCM CONFERENCE
WEB SITE: [HTTP://WWW.SAICM.ORG](http://www.saicm.org)

The ICCM-2 invited all interested parties to become members of the global alliance and, where appropriate, to commit themselves to contributing financial or in-kind resources or expertise towards the development and implementation of alliance activities.

The United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization within their respective mandates and available resources will serve as the secretariat of the global alliance.

UNEP and WHO have initiated work to establish the voluntary alliance. The Conference decision requests the global alliance to adopt terms of reference using the draft terms of reference that were presented to the ICCM2.

The draft terms of reference include an overall goal and objectives, information on membership, guidance for a working definition of "lead paint", possible activities, proposed method of work and resources. It is envisioned that activities will be developed and implemented following the lead sponsor approach. The lead sponsor(s) for each activity in collaboration with interested partners will prepare a workplan, timeline, budget and fund-raising plan.

The global alliance will undertake its work primarily through electronic communication mechanisms.

Models of existing and successful partnerships such as the Partnership on Clean Fuels and Vehicles (<http://www.unep.org/pcf/>) and the Global Mercury Partnership (http://www.chem.unep.ch/MERCURY/partnerships/new_partnership.htm) will be used to develop the alliance.

KEY ACTIVITY AREAS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF LEAD IN PAINTS

- Raising awareness of toxicity to human health and the environment and alternatives;
- Guidance and assistance to identify potential lead exposure;
- Assistance to industry (manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers);
- Prevention programmes to reduce exposure;
- Promotion of national regulatory frameworks.



Photo/ Stuart Eiman

LEAD EXPOSURE IS A WELL-KNOWN SOURCE OF INJURY TO HUMAN HEALTH



Lead exposure is a well-known source of injury to human health, and particularly to the health of children and to workers in lead industries. Lead toxicity is irreversible and its effects generally appear to persist into adolescence and adulthood. After lead in gasoline, lead in paint is overall one of the largest source of lead exposure. Lead paint can remain a source of lead exposure and poisoning for many years after the paint has been applied to surfaces. Lead is persistent in the environment and releases of lead into the environment can remain as a potential source of exposure indefinitely.

Today, paints containing lead are still widely manufactured and sold for use in many countries of the developing world. Therefore, it is very likely that most of the world's population lives in countries where domestic paints with high lead levels are readily available. It has long been known that paints containing lead can be a significant source of childhood lead exposure

and poisoning, especially when they are used to paint the interiors and exteriors of homes or schools, and when they are used to paint toys, furniture, playground equipment and other articles with which children come in contact. Moreover, paints containing lead are used in a variety of infrastructure (e.g., bridges), industrial (e.g., automobile parts), and marine (e.g., ships) applications which can contribute to lead in soils and roadway and sidewalk grit which can be tracked into homes or become airborne and make its way into homes.

Normal weathering as well as repair, renovation, and painting activities which disturb lead paint can contribute to lead loadings in soil and dust. Soil and dust containing lead from lead paint can be tracked into homes and other buildings where it can be a significant source of exposure. House dust is the most common exposure pathway through which children are exposed to lead paint hazards. Dust created during normal wear of lead paint (especially around windows and doors) can create an invisible film over surfaces in a house. Children, particularly younger children, may also ingest lead paint chips from flaking walls, windows, and doors. Lead from exterior house paint can flake off or leach into the soil and dust around the outside of a home, contaminating children's play areas. Renovation, repair and demolition activities actually increase the threat of lead paint exposure by

dispersing lead dust particles in the air and over accessible household surfaces. Dust can be resuspended through household activities, including through cleaning, thereby posing an inhalation risk as well.

In addition to exposures from living in homes with lead paint, adults can be exposed occupationally to lead from lead paint. Workers can be exposed during the manufacture and processing of lead paint, and its use (such as in painting activities). Renovation and paint removal can also be major sources of lead exposure for workers as well as residents. Lead concentrations during paint removal depend largely on the technology used. Dry sanding, abrasive blasting, and burning, welding, or heating surfaces covered with lead paint typically generate highly dangerous airborne lead levels. Generally, abrasive blasting techniques are used, which breaks lead coatings into small particles that can be inhaled or ingested if hands are not washed prior to eating or smoking.

In 2002, WHO World Health Report identified lead exposure as one of twenty leading selected risk factors contributing to the global burden of disease and stated that worldwide, 40 percent of children have blood lead levels greater than 5 µg/dl, and that 97 percent of the affected children live in developing regions. In addition, the WHO World Health Report looked at Disability Adjusted Life Years for different risk factors and ranked lead as 16th.

Lead in Paint *Magnitude of problem*

Lead exposure: well-known source of injury to human health

Children:

- sensory, motor, cognitive and behavioral impacts, including learning disabilities
- attention deficits
- disorders in a child's coordination, visual, spatial and language skills
- anemia

Adults:

- renal and cardiovascular effects, including increased blood pressure and incidence of hypertension

Exposure to lead from paint: common pathways

Children:

- dust in/from homes, schools, public, commercial buildings & structures (e.g. bridges)
- normal wear, dust film & paint chips, renovation activities
- exterior paint flakes off or leaches into soil and dust

Workers:

- during manufacture & processing of lead paint
- use of lead paint
- renovation activities
- during abatement activities

Guidance for a working definition of "lead paint"

The following criteria are used as a working basis for defining "lead paint":

- The term "lead paint" includes paints, varnishes, lacquers, stains, enamels, glazes, primers or coatings used for any purposes;
- Lead is added to the paint, varnish, lacquer, stain, enamel, glaze, primer or coating;
- The total lead concentration is defined on a weight percentage of the total non-volatile portion of the product or in the weight of the dried paint film.



OBJECTIVES

The broad objectives are to phase out the manufacture and sale of paints containing lead and eventually to eliminate the risks from such paint, since such substances contribute to childhood lead exposure.

Specific objectives are:

(a) To raise the awareness of government authorities and regulators, private industry, manufacturers, consumers, workers, trade unions and health-care providers about the toxicity of lead in paints and the availability of technically superior and safer alternatives;

(b) To catalyse the design and implementation of appropriate prevention-based programmes to reduce and eliminate risks from the use of lead in paint. When processes for phasing-out lead are put in place in installations manufacturing paint, arrangements must be made to ensure a

fair transition that protects workers' health [and employment];

(c) To provide assistance to paint manufacturers that continue to produce and market paints containing lead to enable them to phase out lead from their paints;

(d) To promote the establishment of appropriate national regulatory frameworks to stop the manufacture, import, sale and use of paints containing lead for applications likely to contribute to childhood lead exposure;

(e) As appropriate, to promote international third-party certification of new paint products to help consumers to recognize paint and coatings without added lead;

(f) To provide guidance and promote assistance to identify and reduce potential lead exposure in and around housing, such as household dust, and also in child-

care facilities and schools in which paint containing lead is present. Guidance and assistance should also be provided to industrial facilities producing or using paint containing lead to reduce workers' lead exposure.



A. Merritt

INTERNATIONAL PAINT AND PRINTING INK COUNCIL, INC. (IPPIC)

SUPPORTS ACTION INITIATED ON ICCM2 RESOLUTION II/4B “LEAD IN PAINT”

By Stephen Sides, Secretariat, IPPIC

The International Paint and Printing Ink Council, Inc. (IPPIC) was founded in 1992 to establish a global discussion forum for national associations representing the paint and printing ink industries. IPPIC's main interest areas include global health, safety and environmental issues. Over its 18 year history, the IPPIC network organization has established a global presence in these areas, and our efforts to help establish effective policy measures have been advanced through official consultative status with the UN-ECOSOC and IMO, where IPPIC representatives are supporting their respective missions. Accordingly, IPPIC is keenly interested in the constructive measures that emerged from the second session of the International Conference

on Chemicals Management (ICCM2), most specifically to establish co-operative actions under Resolution II/4B to address the global environmental, health and safety concerns regarding lead in paint.

IPPIC had previously (March 2008) established a formal position endorsing widespread adoption of well-defined, regulatory and/or legislative restrictions on the use of lead in paint products. Through its annual meeting forum, IPPIC has interacted with various national government representatives seeking to advance legislative and/or regulatory schemes for lead in paint.

IPPIC fully expects to be a strong contributor to the global alliance being established by UNEP and WHO.

IPPIC member associations have very specific and advanced technical information on paint technologies, testing methods, and current lead use restrictions. In addition, IPPIC has the ability to undertake outreach and education efforts through its affiliated membership network.

From IPPIC's perspective, the planned UNEP and WHO activities provide opportunities to develop a broader, common understanding on various technical issues including analytical methods for lead in paint, background/residual lead content levels in soil-derived materials, and the sources and pathways of environmental lead-contamination that influence remediation efforts.

IPEN partnered with Toxics Link

The International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) partnered with the Indian NGO Toxics Link in 2008 to determine the total lead (Pb) concentration in new decorative paints available in various developing countries in the world in order to obtain information on the availability of lead paint used in developing countries. The following 10 countries were selected for sampling: Sri Lanka from South Asia, Philippines and Thailand from South East Asia, Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria and Senegal from Africa, Belarus from East European Countries and Mexico and Brazil from Latin America. The results confirmed that lead in paint is still being produced and sold, exposing children and communities to this toxic substance. For instance, the average new paint lead concentration in the ten countries studied ranged from 4,091 ppm to 38,970 ppm, many times higher than the USA recommended limit of 90 ppm.

For more information, see:

www.ipen.org/ipenweb/work/lead/lead-map.html

Membership

Participation will be encouraged from the following groups:

(a) Representatives of national Governments including those:

- (i) That have already phased out the use of lead in paint in their countries and are willing to share experiences and provide help to those who are now prepared to do so;
- (ii) Where paints containing lead continue to be sold;

(b) Representatives of relevant intergovernmental organizations (such as the World Health

Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research);

(c) Representatives of the lead industry and the paint and coatings industry,

(d) Representatives of international and national companies that manufacture paints and coatings; and possibly of their relevant trade organizations;

(e) International and national medical, housing

and public health organizations;

(f) Academics with expertise in relevant fields;

(g) Representatives of international and national non-governmental organizations that work on environmental health issues and that have experience of public outreach and awareness campaigns or of implementation of prevention programmes at the community or national levels;

(h) Trade unions at the local, national and international levels, so as to foster the effectiveness of the alliance.



Photo/ Delaney

INFORMATION REQUEST TO POTENTIAL PARTNERS

An information form is being distributed to elicit information from potential members of the alliance on possible contributions to the alliance. It is planned that each entity or individual, upon becoming a member of the global alliance, will commit to contribute resources (financial or in-kind) or expertise to the development and implementation of alliance activities.

Members will work to identify potential rel-

evant donors and resources including, Government donors or other institutional donors with an interest in providing resources for the Alliance activities. The information received will support discussions in an initial working meeting which will be organised in May 2010 to adopt a framework and terms of reference for this alliance.

Deadline for submission: 19 March 2010

UPCOMING EVENTS

Initial organizational meeting of partners

Date & venue: 26-28 May 2010, UNEP, Geneva, International Environment House 1

Objectives to agree:

- 1) terms of reference for the alliance,
- 2) management arrangement for the alliance,
- 3) lead sponsors for priority work areas/tasks,
- 4) work plans, timelines, resources (in-kind and financial) and fund raising strategy for each priority area.



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