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# Fact Sheet

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## 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.dhec.sc.gov/environment/baq/AirPollutionSources/healtheffectsofairpollution.asp>

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DHEC's Bureau of Air Quality, Innovations Section provides information on environmental topics.

Readers are encouraged to reproduce this material. For more information about air quality issues, please call (803) 898-4123 or visit our website at [www.scdhec.gov/baq](http://www.scdhec.gov/baq). Please send written correspondence to:

DHEC's Bureau of Air Quality, Innovations Section, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201.

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