

Council LEAD Project NSW

Briefing on the Council LEAD Project

Purpose of the Project

The Council LEAD Project has been funded by the NSW Environmental Trust to assist Local Government Councils in NSW protect their communities from lead and related hazards.

The Project offers education and support to Local Government in NSW so that Councils can easily take steps in accordance with their capacities and their community's lead risk profile.

The Project continues the Local Government lead education program of the former NSW Lead Reference Centre (LRC). The LRC held a series of regional workshops for Councils on lead and published *Management of Lead Contamination [DRAFT]* for Local Government in late 1999.

A Steering Committee oversees the Project, with representatives from the Local Government and Shires Associations (LGSA), the Total Environment Centre (TEC), the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP), WorkCover NSW, Lake Macquarie Council, CTI Consultants Pty Ltd (Lead Assessors) and The LEAD Group. The LEAD Group, which is carrying out the Project, also operates the Lead Advisory Service which forms part of the support services offered to all NSW Local Government Councils.

The Project is currently only funded to the end of 2001. At the end of the Project, Councils that have adopted a lead-safety strategy suitable for their community will be awarded a Lead Awareness Certificate at an appropriate ceremony.

Why Council LEAD?

Local Councils can choose from a variety of ways to improve their community's lead safety.

A Council can adopt a **Development Control Plan (DCP)** to require lead safe behaviour during activities requiring development approval (eg demolition). Councils can order clean-up or prevention notices under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act or the Local Government Act.

Councils can also engage in **community lead education** in situations where they have no planning powers over private activities which create lead hazards, such as preparation for re-painting.

Councils are also owners of significant community assets which may have lead hazards such as old protective paint. Consequently, they need to have their own **internal safety practices** and procedures - a lead management plan.

The draft of the NSW EPA's forthcoming advisory document on Local Government and lead, *Management of Lead Contamination Renovation and Demolition Practices*, suggested that Councils consider:

- *Applying the principles of lead hazard management contained in this document to their own infrastructure management and operational activities.*
- *Informing the community of the hazards of lead and ways to minimise risk by raising awareness of, and making available educational material referred to in this document.*
- *Promoting appropriate lead management work practices to developers and renovators through effective education programs*
- *Considering adopting a DCP as council policy and applying it to applications for local and integrated development.*
- *Ensuring that parties involved in development (ie developers and/or accredited certifiers) are aware of their need to comply with the provisions of the DCP where one exists.*

The Project's strategy

The premise of the project is that Councils have important roles in protecting their community from lead hazards and are becoming more willing to act to promote their community's health. However, there are three main constraints on Councils' capacity to act:

- inadequate knowledge about the extent of the hazard;
- insufficient awareness or skills to act;
- limited resources for competing priorities.

The **Council LEAD Project** aims to address these constraints directly by encouraging and supporting Councils in their endeavours to promote lead-safe communities. It will take account of resource constraints by helping Councils develop a feasible strategy with specific and useful projects.

The basic process of the project is to establish communication with an appropriate officer in each Council; assist that liaison officer develop a draft strategy; and provide resources and continuing phone support to Council implementing their strategy. The project will

- transfer knowledge about the lead-safety tools available to Local Government
- train Councils' staff in skills to use these tools through liaison, workshops and phone advice
- support activities and behaviour consistent with being a "lead-safe Council", such as developing a lead safety strategy

The intended outcomes from the project are changes in the behaviours of the various target audiences towards more lead-safe behaviour.

	Target Audiences	Aim
primary	Local Government staff and Councillors	To give knowledge about and commitment to lead safety so that Councils develop and maintain institutional skills for lead hazard management and community education.
secondary	Contact workers involved with lead hazards (eg demolition, builders, doctors)	To change their behaviour through the Council staff and Council activities.
tertiary	The endangered who will be harmed by lead-hazardous activity (eg occupants of lead-affected dwellings and workplaces, esp. children under five and pregnant women).	To promote lead-safe behaviour to mitigate and manage lead hazards.

The Project's management

Staff from The LEAD Group's Lead Advisory Service Australia (LASA), a project whose NSW funding has ceased, were redeployed to undertake the Project. These staff have expertise in lead safety, management, abatement and education.

The Steering Committee met and finalised the Project's approach. The imminent release by the NSW EPA of an advisory document, *Management of Lead Contamination Renovation and Demolition Practices* had a significant impact on the Project's design. The Steering Committee agreed to act as an advisory group to finalise the publication so the report and the Project could support each other. The EPA report should be available later in 2001 and will be circulated to Councils as the core part of a Lead Resource Tool Kit. Project staff are investigating other appropriate materials for the Tool Kit.

Monitoring framework

The project will develop and apply specific performance measures so that its success in achieving skill and behaviour change amongst Councils can be monitored and measured. The project objectives are measurable and will be monitored through the project as key performance indicators. The project process will be documented to assist with other and parallel campaigns.

The core of the project involves three types of activities:

1. **Stimulation** of Councils so they adopt more lead-safe practices
2. **Resourcing** Councils with “tools” that assist them in carrying out lead-safety activities
3. **Education and activation by Councils** of the community (including workers) so they practice lead-safe behaviours.

In essence, the Project seeks to encourage Councils to undertake a series of tasks which, it is argued, will increase community lead safety. The project is monitored primarily by recording the types of stimulus provided and the types of actions taken.

Whether the Project is effective in its underlying purpose – increasing lead safety – might be determined by looking at indicators of such change.

- The core measures are the age-adjusted rates of blood-lead testing (more tests indicating greater community awareness) and the prevalence of high blood-lead results.
- Secondary measures are indicators of greater lead awareness, such as use of lead-safety equipment or services, calls to LASA or other help lines, and contacts with Councils, doctors and other advisers.

Currently, the project does not have resources for external collection and analysis of data such as blood-lead testing. Some data is collected by NSW health and Medicare.

The proposed activities in the project, and the responses to be monitored, are detailed below.

Key Research Questions	Project Activity	Key measures
Which Project activities best stimulate Local Government activity (eg information, workshops, media)?	◆ Contact letter	◆ % acknowledged
	◆ Liaison officer	◆ % appointed
	◆ Baseline data	◆ % provided
	◆ Resource kit	◆ % examined
	◆ Community Lead Risk Assessment	◆ % completed
	◆ Strategy preparation	◆ % prepared
	◆ Strategy adoption	◆ % adopted
	◆ Strategy progress	◆ number / type
	◆ Other conversations / emails	◆ number recorded
Key Research Questions	Council / Community Activity	Key measures
Which Council activities achieve most community lead-safe behaviour (eg controls, example, education, advocacy)?	◆ Activities occurring	◆ number /type
	◆ Increased community awareness	◆ number of calls to LASA
	◆ Increased community information	◆ Council advice; media monitor
	◆ Blood testing	◆ available data
	◆ High blood-lead levels	◆ available data

Support for Councils

Phone: (02) 9716 0966

Fax: (02) 9716 9005

[Email:](#)

HOT-LINE SUPPORT

The **Lead Advisory Service Australia (LASA)** will be on-line to respond rapidly to calls from Council officers, whether by phone, fax, or e-mail.

Records on the nature of calls from Councils are kept, with all other calls, on the LASA Client Database. The LEAD Group will monitor the nature of calls received from Councils so it can provide appropriate resource support.

RESOURCE MATERIAL

To meet Council requests for specialist information, Project staff can research The LEAD Group's library, the most extensive lead library in Australia open to the public

On-line searching of our smaller but computer-catalogued database of key references will be possible through project staff or on The LEAD Group's web-site.

WEB RESOURCES

The LEAD Group's web site has a variety of downloadable information and links on lead. Visit today!

www.lead.org.au

COMMUNITY LEAD RISK ASSESSMENT (CLARA)

The LEAD Group is developing a Community Lead Risk Assessment to make it easier for Councils to identify and review lead hazards in their community. Completing such an assessment is the first step in developing a cost-efficient strategy.

COUNCIL LEAD SAFETY TOOL KIT

Resource materials which complement the EPA document, "*Guide for Councils in Managing Lead Contamination in Home Maintenance, Renovation and Demolition Practices; including an example development control plan*", will be assembled into Tool Kit and will also be available from The LEAD Group's web site. The Kit will include how-to materials and sample documents that can be easily amended for Council uses such as:

- presentations to Councillors and staff about lead,
- sample documents such as the model DCP,
- risk assessment indicators,
- community education material
- other agencies' documents (eg WorkCover's *Assessment of Lead Exposure associated with Ceiling Dust Removal*.)
- resource material from The LEAD Group's specialist library.



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If you have not already done so, please nominate a Liaison Officer for this project and complete the enclosed baseline data survey, which takes only a few minutes.