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## WORKING SAFELY WITH SHEET LEAD

Lead sheet is widely used for roofing, flashings and waterproofing applications throughout North America and Europe.

Lead can be of harm to people only if it is taken into the body in a large amount, or regularly in small amounts. Lead can be taken into the body only through the nose, lungs, and stomach via the mouth. Safe lead practice is, therefore, based on preventing ingestion and inhalation of lead. Inorganic lead is not significantly absorbed through unbroken skin.

Adopting a few common sense working practices will minimize the risk of lead intake.

Avoid the generation of lead dust, which will occur if lead is filed, ground or sanded. If dust is generated, wear a respirator complying with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Lead Standard. Clean up dust using a special "HEPA"\* vacuum cleaner or by "wet" sweeping. Do not use dry sweeping methods.

Lead fumes will be generated if lead is heated over 5000C. This may occur when propane or oxy-hydrogen torches are used to heat lead, e.g., in leadburning or welding. Care should be taken not to overheat lead in these operations. Again, wear a respirator complying with the OSHA Lead Standard, and ensure good ventilation.

Avoid hand-to-mouth transfer of lead. Wash hands and face thoroughly before eating, drinking or smoking. Wear gloves when handling lead to ensure a better level of cleanliness.

Note: Smoking and eating while working with lead is prohibited by legislation in the United States and Canada.

Other safety tips:

If lead dust or fume is being generated, safety eyewear should be worn in addition to a respirator.

Lead is a dense metal. A small roll of lead sheet may be heavier to lift than expected. Ensure good lifting practice is used.

To avoid being sprayed with molten lead, do not immerse wet or damp metal or tools into molten lead.

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\* Uses a High Efficiency Particulate filter