

Lead safe recreation:

Lead at outdoor ranges



Who is at risk?

- Pregnant women
- Children
- Range workers
- Target or hobby shooters
- Law enforcement
- Families of those who use the range, especially children

Lead poisoning is preventable! Protect yourself and your family. There is no safe level of lead.



Lead exposure occurs from:

- Shooting, collecting casings, and handling spent bullets.
- Breathing in lead dust after firing a gun.
- Touching lead and lead dust from bullets.
- Ingesting lead because of eating or drinking with contaminated hands.
- Stagnant air increases lead exposure. Some outdoor ranges have ballistic baffles overhead with concrete walls and structures on the sides. These features increase shooting safety but can increase lead dust exposure because there is less air flow around the shooter.

Prevent shooting range lead exposures

- Use jacketed or lead-free bullets and no-lead primers.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke at a firing range.
- Wear gloves and eye protection when cleaning firearms or firing range surfaces.
- Wash hands and face with soap and water or clean them with lead decontamination wipes after shooting, handling spent cartridge cases, or cleaning weapons. Clean hands and face before eating, drinking, or smoking.
- Change and bag clothes, hats, and shoes before leaving a firing range facility and wash items separately from family laundry.

Your family may also be at risk

- Shooters and workers can carry lead home on their clothing and skin and expose their families to lead. **Lead in the home is especially dangerous for children and pregnant women.**
- Children's blood lead levels should be tested by their pediatrician. There is no safe blood lead level in children. However, a blood lead level above 3.5 micrograms per deciliter (mcg/L) indicates increased risk of health effects.
- Children exposed to lead may develop lower IQ, learning disabilities, stunted growth, kidney damage, and attention-related behaviors, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- Pregnant women exposed to lead may experience low birth-weight babies, premature births, miscarriage, and stillbirth.

Test your blood lead level

- Adults exposed to lead may develop difficulties with memory, attention, learning, hearing loss, infertility, and high blood pressure.
- Contact your health care provider and ask for a simple blood lead level test for you and your family. These tests are covered by Medicaid and most private health insurance.

Resources

Idaho Environmental Health Program: Lead webpage.
healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/EnvironmentalHealth/HealthyHomes/Lead/tabid/941/Default.aspx

Environmental Protection Agency: Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges. www.epa.gov/lead/best-management-practices-lead-outdoor-shooting-ranges

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health: Reducing Exposure to Lead and Noise at Outdoor Firing Ranges. www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/wp-solutions/2013-104/pdfs/2013-104.pdf

Contact

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Children and pregnant women are most at risk from lead exposure



Never eat, drink, or smoke while shooting



Remember to stay safe while enjoying your hobby!



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