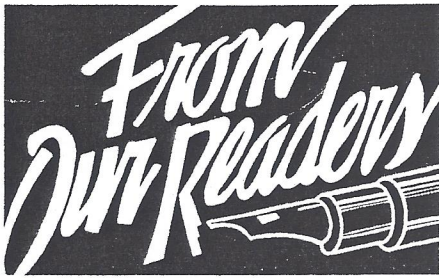


January 1993 issue (each page)



The letter that follows was sent to Larry LePrevost subsequent to his "Tech Topics" feature on "Reducing Your Lead Risk" that appeared in the September 1992 issue of ShopTalk. In turn, we are also printing Larry's response in the form of an "open letter".

Dear Larry:

I'm the person who wrote in to ShopTalk about having an exceptionally high lead level (August 1992 issue, "Suggestion Shop" column). The Missouri State Health Department came to my shop to check the shop and me. When working on a radiator with a monitor attached to my shirt, and with my vent running, we found the lead level in the air to be very low. But, when I brushed off some dry solder bloom, the level went higher than hell! Now, I only brush it off when it is wet.

I hope what you wrote in ShopTalk, along with my little comments, will help others. I want you to know I think you wrote one hell of a good story on this.

Sincerely,

Harvey Wasson
Wasson Service
Perry, Missouri

An Open Letter to Harvey Wasson:

Dear Harvey:

We much appreciate your comments, which are being passed along to other ShopTalk readers who will most certainly benefit. Your message should be a clear warning for all radiator men to avoid creating lead dust when using a stainless steel brush to clean headers. To confirm your point, we brushed some dry "crud" and solder bloom off a junk header, and then analyzed it for lead content. More than 2% of this stuff was lead dust or, perhaps worse, lead oxide. Lead oxide can be so powdery fine that it is virtually invisible. It can become airborne much easier than other forms of lead. When breathed in, it is so small that it has no trouble finding its way into the blood stream. Another form of lead that is potentially as harmful is tetra-ethyl lead, which is added to leaded gasoline. Lead in any form can be harmful, although in a solid mass (as in solder) it poses far less risk to workers, unless they forget to wash their hands before eating or smoking. Think of it this way: The smaller the particle size, the bigger the potential threat.

We join in urging all radiator shops to eliminate lead dust as much as humanly possible. Make sure all headers are wet before brushing them off. Then, clean up the mud and get it contained before it dries out to become dust again. Sandblasting is an alternative, providing the radiator is small enough and your cabinet is big enough. However, to elaborate on a couple of points from our last article, (1) the sand blast cabinet may be the most hazardous area in your shop. Safe work rules should be established (this includes wearing a dust mask) and should apply to anyone who opens the cabinet door. (2) Never use a wire wheel, pneumatic grinder or revolving end brush on an electric drill to clean any surface that has a solder coating. Doing so just fills the air with lead particles too fine to even see. Remember, the smaller the particle, the bigger the threat lead can be.

Thanks again, Harvey.

Larry LePrevost
National Sales Manager
Johnson Manufacturing Co.



JOHNSON MANUFACTURING CO
114 LOST GROVE RD
PRINCETON, IA 52768-0096

ShopTalk

Medline Manufacturing Company
Aftermarket Division
1500 Dekoven Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53403

5010-01101
FNS1-01103

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