

**B**erger Paints, which was started in the United Kingdom in 1760, is an industry leader in high quality paints. Committed in its vision to providing consumers with the highest quality of products, Berger has recently launched an aggressive campaign throughout GCC to alert residents to the harmful effects caused by presence of lead and other heavy metals like mercury, chromium and arsenic in cheap low quality paints.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. M Sudhir, General Manager, Berger Paints Oman, described how studies by the World Health Organization (WHO) and US Consumer Product Safety Commission (USPSC) have shown how lead-based paints are a major source of lead poisoning. Especially at risk are growing children. In children, lead poisoning has been found to cause irreversible brain damage and retard mental and physical development, while among adults it can cause poor muscle coordination, increase hypertension, and damage to cardiovascular, renal, reproductive and gastrointestinal systems.

To eliminate any possible chances of contamination, Berger conducted a comprehensive and rigorous audit for lead, mercury, chrome and arsenic. Today, all decorative products offered by Berger Paints in Oman are completely free from added lead and all cans bear the green lead free logo.

## FAQs

### WHAT IS LEAD POISONING?

Lead poisoning (also known as plumbism, colica pictonium, saturnism, Devon colic, or painter's colic) is a medical condition caused by increased levels of lead in the blood.

### ARE THERE ANY POTENTIAL HEALTH PROBLEMS FOR ADULTS DUE TO LEAD POISONING?

Independent reports by both the World Health Organization and the United States Product Safety Commission (USPSC) have both concluded that

## BERGER PAINTS

# Safeguarding consumer health

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M Sudhir, General Manager, Berger Paints Oman

lead interferes with the nervous system development. Several body systems such as cardiovascular, reproductive, renal and gastrointestinal systems get affected.

### WHAT CAN YOU CALL AS DANGEROUS LEVELS OF LEAD IN PAINTS?

Internationally accepted lowest limit by various bodies including the US Green Seal and other several standards is 100ppm (0.01%).

### ONCE PAINT IS APPLIED ON THE WALL WHICH HAS LEAD CONTENT IN IT, HOW CAN IT ENTER THE BODY?

Breathing the paint dust generated during renovation, eating of paint chips (especially by children), eating food with soiled hands (covered with lead dust) are some of the common sources.

### WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE TO PREVENT MY FAMILY FROM LEAD POISONING DUE TO PAINTS?

Do paint your home only with those paints which do not contain any added lead. Look for the "No added Lead" logo sticker on the container. When buying paint, insist only on lead-free paints that come with the manufacturer's guarantee.

Ensure the articles you buy like toys, furniture etc are not painted with lead based paints. Wash your hands frequently, especially before you eat, as a matter of general hygiene.

### WHAT CATEGORIES OF PAINTS (IN GENERAL) ARE MORE LIKELY TO CONTAIN LEAD AND OTHER HEAVY METALS?

Solvent based paints are more likely to contain lead. But Berger Paints has removed lead and other heavy metals from all decorative paints including solvent based paints