



OSHA



[For Workers](#) ▾
 [For Employers](#) ▾
 [Law & Regulations](#) ▾
 [Data & Statistics](#) ▾
 [Enforcement](#) ▾
 [Training & Education](#) ▾

[News & Publications](#) ▾
 [English](#)
[About OSHA](#)
[A to Z Index](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[FAQs](#)
[What's New](#)

|
[Spanish](#)

[OSHA News Release - Table of Contents](#)



OSHA News Release – Region 5

U.S. Department of Labor

September 28, 2016

**Wisconsin military explosives manufacturer faces nearly \$143K
 in OSHA penalties for exposing workers to lead and other hazards**
OSHA finds workers exposed to lead levels two-and-a-half times the permissible limit

SPOONER, Wis. - When a Wisconsin explosive component manufacturer started a new production line at its Spooner facility, the company failed to comply with federal safety standards to protect its employees from the dangers of exposure to lead used in the production process, federal investigators say.

A U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspection found R. Stresau Laboratory Inc. failed to implement a combination of engineering, work practice and respiratory protection controls. By doing so, the employer exposed about 40 employees to lead. Personal and wipe sampling conducted by OSHA found four employees were overexposed - two above the action level and two over the permissible exposure limit. Stresau produces components used by the defense industry to build missiles and warheads. The company currently has a contract with the U.S. Navy.

On Sept. 23, 2016, OSHA proposed \$143,576 in penalties after citing one willful violation, eight serious violations and one other-than-serious violation.

"OSHA found that employees were breathing in significant amounts of lead and had elevated blood lead levels. Elevated levels can cause debilitating and permanent health issues," said Mark Hysell, OSHA's area director in Eau Claire. "R. Stresau ignored federal regulations when it failed to conduct air monitoring for lead and allowed the use of respiratory protection to be voluntary when it should have been required as a health precaution."

In addition to overexposing at least four workers, the agency's April 2016 investigation found the laboratory failed to conduct monitoring to assess employee exposure to lead, failed to implement an adequate lead compliance program and respiratory protection program and failed to provide training on the hazards and symptoms of lead exposure. Overexposure to lead can lead to brain damage, as well as kidney disease, gastrointestinal issues and anemia.

The agency also found that R. Stresau Laboratory failed to:

- Follow respiratory protection requirements, including fit-testing employees, identifying and evaluating respiratory hazards;
- Conduct preventative maintenance checks on ventilation systems;
- Require the use of personal protective equipment;
- Provide changing rooms and showers for employees exposed to lead hazards to prevent cross-contamination and lead dust leaving the facility.

[View current citations here.](#)

The company has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director, or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

To ask questions, obtain compliance assistance, file a complaint, or report amputations, eye loss, workplace hospitalizations, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, the public should call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-OSHA (6742) or the agency's Eau Claire office at 715-832-9019.


Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to ensure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>.

###

Scott Allen, 312-353-6976, allen.scott@dol.gov
Rhonda Burke, 312-353-6976, burke.rhonda@dol.gov

Release Number: 16-1877-CHI

U.S. Department of Labor news materials are accessible at <http://www.dol.gov>. The department's Reasonable Accommodation Resource Center converts departmental information and documents into alternative formats, which include Braille and large print. For alternative format requests, please contact the department at (202) 693-7828 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (federal relay).

 OSHA News Release - Table of Contents

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Occupational Safety and Health Administration
200 Constitution Ave., NW,
Washington, DC 20210
☎ 800-321-6742 (OSHA)
TTY
www.OSHA.gov

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

White House
Affordable Care Act
Disaster Recovery Assistance
USA.gov
Disability.gov
Plain Writing Act
Recovery Act
No Fear Act
U.S. Office of Special Counsel

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Frequently Asked Questions
A - Z Index
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
Read the OSHA Newsletter
Subscribe to the OSHA Newsletter
OSHA Publications
Office of Inspector General

ABOUT THE SITE

Freedom of Information Act (FIOA)
Privacy & Security Statement
Disclaimers
Important Web Site Notices
Plug-ins Used by DOL
RSS Feeds from DOL
Accessibility Statement