



Children found to have lead poisoning

Julia Medew

June 28, 2011



469 cases of lead paint exposure have been reported in the first half of 2010 alone.

469 cases of lead paint exposure have been reported in the first half of 2010 alone.

HUNDREDS of Victorians suffered lead poisoning last year, including home renovators and children exposed to lead-based paint.

Department of Health figures show 469 cases during the first six months of 2010. It is the first time the department has published the figures after it became mandatory in January last year for health professionals to report high levels of lead in people's blood.

While 95 per cent of the cases were associated with workplace exposure and referred to Worksafe Victoria, four children and 10 adults had been exposed to lead-based paint, scrap metal and the lead lining in a bath.

One child swallowed a lead curtain weight and one adult was believed to have been exposed through an ayurvedic medication from India.

The lead report, published in the *Victorian Infectious Diseases Bulletin*, said although 18 of the 446 workers with high lead levels in their blood had to leave their jobs because of their exposure, some had not been reported to WorkSafe as required.

The department's infectious diseases bulletin also reported that chlamydia and gonorrhoea infections had continued to rise in Victoria last year while syphilis and HIV infections dropped off