



News Release

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US Department of Labor's OSHA cites Blandon, Pa., brass foundry
\$550,400 for exposing workers to lead and other workplace hazards

BLANDON, Pa. – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued citations to Kief Industries Inc., doing business as Excelsior Brass Works. The citations allege the company knowingly exposed workers to lead hazards and violated federal workplace safety and health standards at its Blandon facility. Proposed penalties total \$550,400.

"The employer deliberately refused to protect workers from overexposure to lead and other workplace hazards. Even though company management knew of the OSHA requirements and the workers' lead exposures, it failed to provide medical surveillance to monitor worker health and to train its workers about lead-exposure risks," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "OSHA will use the full extent of the law to ensure employers are held accountable for failing to protect workers."

Following its investigation, OSHA cited Excelsior Brass Works for willful and serious violations of the lead standard, which requires employers to protect their workers from lead exposure. Lead can cause brain damage, paralysis, kidney disease and even death.

The willful citations allege the company did not take air samples as required for workers who were over-exposed to airborne lead, and it did not provide the required annual training about lead-exposure hazards. Willful citations also allege failures to provide the required medical surveillance for the lead-exposed workers and to make available the results of medical tests performed shortly after OSHA came to the facility and opened the inspection. An additional willful violation alleges that the company stopped providing hearing tests to employees over-exposed to noise. Willful violations are those committed with intentional, knowing or voluntary disregard for legal requirements, or plain indifference to employee safety and health.



Serious citations of the lead standards allege failures to install additional engineering controls; to have an updated, written lead compliance program; to store lead-contaminated clothing in a closed container; to maintain surfaces like microwaves and lunchroom floors free of lead dust; to vacuum clothes to remove lead dust before entering the lunchroom; to provide medical exams to employees with high blood-lead levels; and to maintain proper air sampling records.

Additional serious citations allege that the employer failed to install engineering controls for noise; establish a written respirator program; to provide respirator fit-tests; and establish a program with procedures to shut down and lock out hazardous energy sources before servicing and maintaining machines. OSHA issues a serious citation when there is substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result and the employer knew, or should have known, of the hazard.

Two other-than-serious violations, accounting for \$1,200 of the total penalties, allege record keeping deficiencies.

Excelsior Brass Works, with six previous OSHA inspections at its Blandon facility, manufactures brass and bronze castings.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of the citations to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director, or contest the citations and proposed penalties before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. The investigation was conducted by OSHA's office in Harrisburg, Pa; telephone: 717-782-3902. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-5742.

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 assure 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>.