

Is Your Family Exposed to Lead on the Golden Gate Bridge?

In the past several months, [Golden Gate Waste](#) has chronicled repeated instances of lead [contamination](#) and [re-contamination](#) on the Golden Gate Bridge. Perhaps most disturbing is the [presence of lead paint chips](#) on the pedestrian walkway of the Bridge. Golden Gate Waste and a Bridge District-paid consultant have both warned Bridge management about the presence of lead paint chips in public areas of the Bridgeⁱ.

Why should the general public be concerned about lead paint on the Bridge?

Even low lead exposure can cause children to:

- Grow more slowly,
- Have learning disabilities (including attention deficit disorder),
- Experience behavioral problems, and
- Sometimes can cause anemia or digestive problems.

Low lead exposure can cause adults to have:

- Severe anemia,
- Damage to kidneys,
- Damage to brain,
- Damage to nervous system, and
- Reduced fertility.

For pregnant women: lead is absorbed more quickly during pregnancy and it passes through the placenta to the fetus and can cause miscarriage or premature birth.

For men: lead exposure can decrease your libido, cause impotency, cause infertility, and cause damage to sperm. Lead exposure to your body can increase the chance of miscarriage, premature birth and birth defects in your children.

Lead poisoning can occur when any substrate covered with lead paint is sanded, cut, heated, burned or blasted with abrasives. When that lead ends up in the air and then on the ground, **anyone in the nearby environment** can be exposed to this lead. Poisoning may occur if the lead is not properly contained and enough lead is ingested. **The old paint on the Golden Gate Bridge has lead in it.**

Failure to contain lead paint is what has happened repeatedly at the Golden Gate Bridge. Improperly trained and managed workers have sand-blasted and chipped old Bridge paint to prepare surfaces for new paint. The workers have failed to properly contain the resulting lead paint chips, allowing them to contaminate the surrounding environment, including the public pedestrian walkway.

The possible exposure of you and your family (and future family) to lead is only the tip of the iceberg for the mismanagement of the Golden Gate Bridge under current Bridge Manager Kary Witt. Golden Gate Waste has also documented:

- **[Toll Increases](#)**: Golden Gate Bridge Tolls went up 100% in 2010 from \$3 to \$6, and carpoolers tolls went from \$0 to \$3 in 2010.
- **[Costly Management Travel](#)**: Witt and other top managers have taken business trips world-wide on the District's dime. Witt's travel has cost the Bridge District \$20,000 just in the last three years alone.
- **[Highly-paid Workers Asleep on the Job](#)**: Golden Gate Bridge painters, some of the highest-paid industrial painters in the nation, have recently been found sleeping on the job.

It is time for Kary Witt's mis-management of this historic landmark, and taking risks with the public's health, to end.

Check back with [Golden Gate Waste](#) each week as we further document the mis-management and dangerous practices at the Golden Gate Bridge.

ⁱ Vantagepoint Consulting Re: Results of Air Monitoring for Exposures to Lead During Lead Wool and Oakum Removal on the West Main Cable between Saddles 115 to 119 on November 28, 2011, Project #VP-11-08 dated December 6, 2011.