

Report on activities
during the Eighth

INTERNATIONAL LEAD POISONING PREVENTION WEEK

25–31 October 2020

#BanLeadPaint #ILPPW2020

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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ILPPW – International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week

IPEN – International Pollutants Elimination Network

NGO – nongovernmental organization

ppm – parts per million

SAICM – Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme

WCC – World Coatings Council

WHO – World Health Organization



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The eighth International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW) was held on 25–31 October 2020, with more than 90 events in 60 countries organized by governments, civil society organizations, health partners, industry and other institutions.

ILPPW is an ongoing initiative of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (the Lead Paint Alliance), led jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and WHO. The aim of the Week is to raise awareness about the health effects of lead exposure, highlight the efforts of countries and partners to prevent exposure, particularly of children, and to stimulate further action to eliminate lead paint through national regulation.

The 2020 campaign advocated for accelerated action towards global phasing out of lead paint through regulatory and legal measures. This issue is important, as the manufacture and sale of lead paint are still permitted in nearly 60% of countries in the world, representing a continuing source of lead exposure for children, pregnant women and workers.

Event organizers were encouraged to register their events in advance on a [campaign website](#) hosted by WHO. Most organizers planned a number of activities for the 2020 campaign, the most common events involving mass and social media, followed by webinars and advocacy to policy-makers. The most common objective of campaign activities was to increase public awareness about lead paint and build support for establishment of legally binding controls to eliminate lead paint.

The most active organizers of events were nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), many of which were participants in the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), a partner of the Lead Paint Alliance. Local and national governments were also active during the 2020 campaign week.

The majority of event organizers used customizable information materials made available through the WHO campaign website. The most widely used materials were the sample social media package, infographics, customizable flyers and posters and web banners.

Although some activities were curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic, there continued to be strong interest in contributing to ILPPW and collective campaigning to eliminate the use of lead paint. Particular goals of the 2020 campaign, illustrated in this report, are additional increases in the awareness of the public, consumers and industry about the dangers of lead paint and increased support for eliminating lead paint through legally binding controls. Social media played an important role in the ILPPW 2020 campaign, as seen from the large number of social media posts and the activities of social media influencers. The hashtag “Ban Lead Paint” reached over 2 million users. Use of streaming services and other broadcast media were particularly useful in the campaign, as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to restrict face-to-face events in many countries.



BACKGROUND

The Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (Lead Paint Alliance) is a voluntary collaborative initiative jointly led by WHO and UNEP to focus and catalyse the work of diverse stakeholders to achieve international goals to prevent children's exposure to lead from paints and to minimize occupational exposure to lead paint. Its broad objective is to promote phasing-out of the manufacture and sale of paints containing lead to eventually eliminate the risks posed by such paints. This will require that all countries establish legally binding controls to stop the use of lead in paint.

There is no known level of lead exposure without harmful effects, and even low levels may cause lifelong health problems and adversely affect the environment. Young children are particularly vulnerable. Lead paint is an important source of exposure that is entirely preventable. Children are exposed to lead when paint applied in houses, schools and playgrounds ages and flakes and crumbles, contaminating household dust and soil, which may be ingested by children. Workers are exposed during the manufacture, application and removal of lead paint.

Lead compounds have been commonly added to paint as pigments, to speed drying and to improve resistance to corrosion. There are, however, safer alternatives, and there is therefore no need to continue to add lead compounds to paint. The most effective way of ensuring that lead compounds are no longer used in paint is for countries to establish stringent, legally binding limits on the content of lead in paint and controls on the production, import and sale of paint with a lead content of no more than 90 parts per million (ppm).

The annual International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW) campaign is supported by partners in the Lead Paint Alliance, including UNEP, WHO, the US Environmental Protection Agency and IPEN. The campaign provides an opportunity to increase and mobilize political and social commitment to the establishment of legally binding controls for elimination of lead paint. The number of national awareness campaigns organized each year is one of the indicators used in assessing progress towards achieving the

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