



The Lead Education and Abatement Design Group Incorporated

aims to eliminate lead poisoning globally and to ensure
that the ecosystem is protected from lead in all its uses.

ABN 25 819 463 114

Fact sheet: Let's Make Leaded Petrol History One company stands in the way of the world's first global phase-out

By Elizabeth O'Brien, edited by Anne Roberts and Zac Gethin-Damon, The LEAD Group Inc. Australia.

NB: the facts in this fact sheet are fully referenced in [Chronology of Leaded Gasoline / Leaded Petrol History](#) - Knowledge of the dangers of lead in petrol / gasoline; Steps taken and not taken, to phase out leaded petrol; Steps remaining to achieve global leaded petrol phase-out, The LEAD Group Inc, 13 December 2011.

There is no safe level of lead in blood except zero. No one on the planet and no organism has ever been found to have a blood lead level of zero. We ALL have some lead in us. How much is in your blood, in your bones? Will your bone stores soon leach in to your blood and give you some the symptoms that we think of as "ageing"? What's your blood pressure like? Did you know that two of the most common ways to die are by heart attack or stroke, and that lead exposure (earlier in life) increases the risk of both? The major source of the global epidemic of lead poisoning which began 90 years ago in December 1921 is lead in petrol. Since 1993, only one company, Innospec, has continued to make the lead additive for gasoline, tetra-ethyl lead (TEL) maintaining its global monopoly over this significant contributor to negative impacts on the health, learning ability, crime rates and risk of early death of all of us, right up to today.

Environmental Health NGOs like The LEAD Group regularly call for a ban on this toxic substance or that toxic consumer product or elimination of hazardous work processes, but our efforts in working with the World Health Organisation and the United Nations etc are wasted if we don't receive early cooperation (voluntary or forced) from the makers of these toxic problems, in order to actually achieve the phase-outs that we celebrate when target dates are first decided. The LEAD Group is not aware of ANY toxic THING that has successfully been completely phased out globally. Join us in the effort to complete the phase-out of lead in petrol, thus setting a global precedent and an inspiration for all future toxics campaigns.

The UN target date for global phase-out for leaded petrol was 2008, and has just been spun out to 2013

In April 1994, the United Nations called for government action to eliminate lead from gasoline globally. In retrospect, they could simply have ordered Innospec to stop making TEL for petrol and start making non-lead additives. Original phase-out targets were set at **2008** (by the United Nations in 2002), then **2010** (set in 2006 by SAICM (Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management)). Who among us can accept that the profits of one company outweigh the health of millions of people and the biosphere itself?

Now the UN has accepted **2013** as the date for phase-out, apparently based on Innospec's 2008 statement: "We intend to manage the decrease in the sales of TEL for use in automotive gasoline to

The LEAD Group Inc. PO Box 161 Summer Hill 2130 NSW Australia

Phone: 02 9716 0014

Email: www.lead.org.au/cu.html Web: www.lead.org.au

maximize the cash flow through the decline” and the company’s 2009 announcement: “We expect that we will cease all sales of TEL for use in automotive gasoline in 2012.”

The global phase-out of leaded petrol will occur when:

- **Innospec ceases to supply TEL for petrol, and**
- **buys back unblended stocks of TEL from refineries;**

and when:

- **all blended leaded petrol stocks are used up.**

What has been done to date, to achieve the global phase-out?

After the wealthiest countries had completed their phase-outs, the World Bank assisted many Asian countries and the United Nations has assisted some 80 national governments with their phase-outs. The slowdown in the pace of national phase-outs is a testament to Innospec’s business planning “to maximize the cash flow through the decline” (Feb 2008). In an 18 month period prior to Innospec’s Feb 2008 Annual Report 40 countries stopped selling leaded petrol. However, following Innospec’s 2008 Report to the US Government, progress stopped: in a period of 38 months only another 11 countries stopped selling leaded petrol. As of June 2011 there were a final six countries still making leaded petrol at their refineries and only one of them has an official phase-out date planned – and that date is 2013.

On 20 May 2008, The LEAD Group thus determined it was time to change tack - to cut off the supply of TEL (or the lead in the TEL) for MOGAS, rather than wait for the final national governments to achieve phase-out.

Any one of the following six people has the power to achieve the global phase-out sooner than 2013:

Ivan Glasenberg, CEO of Xstrata, which supplies the lead that Innospec makes in to TEL for MOGAS; **David Cameron**, Prime Minister of the UK where Innospec makes the TEL; **Julia Gillard**, Prime Minister of Australia, who could declare a moratorium on lead exports destined for the UK and being made into lead petrol additive by Innospec.; US President **Barack Obama**, by demanding an end to the sale of lead additive for petrol by US-incorporated Innospec; Swiss President **Micheline Calmy-Rey** by controlling either of two Swiss companies: Xstrata which mines the lead and owns the smelting company that refines the lead that is later manufactured into the lead additive for leaded petrol; and Alcor (a subsidiary of Innospec) which assists Innospec in TEL marketing / distribution. But most of all, one man, **Patrick Williams**, Innospec’s CEO, has the power to re-write the TEL supply policy of Innospec’s Stewardship programme to stop TEL ending up in MOGAS.

Research since 2002 (when the 2008 phase-out date was set) on the dangers of lead:

Even low levels of lead in the blood, [mainly due to the use of leaded gasoline] raise blood pressure and are predicted to cause early death in as many as 30 million US adults.

The LEAD Group has web-published [*Dangers of a blood lead level above 2 µg/dL and below 10 µg/dL to adults*](#) and [*Dangers of a blood lead level above 2 µg/dL and below 10 µg/dL to children*](#), which summarise some three dozen new findings of the serious impacts of lead at blood lead levels below what the US Centers for Disease Control currently uses as an intervention level.

In April 2011, the estimated global annual impacts of the global use of lead in vehicle fuels were found [by [Hatfield and Tsai in a United Nations-commissioned report](#)] to be significant:

Close to **1.1 million deaths**;

A loss of **322 million IQ points**;

Close to **60 million crime cases**;

Economic loss of **USD 2.4 trillion per year (4% of global GDP)**. [[A later peer-reviewed Tsai and Hatfield publication](#) found **4.27% of global GDP** to be a closer estimate.]

Consequences of further delay until 2013:

Nearly 200 million people in six countries (Afghanistan, Algeria, Burma, Iraq, North Korea and Yemen) will be exposed to lead from leaded petrol for another two years (or more) unless something is done outside their countries.

What government agencies can do to speed up the phase-out:

SAICM delegates and government Partners of the United Nations' Partnership for Cleaner Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) can support The LEAD Group's requests to the six people mentioned above in their own communications and actions on this issue. It is especially important for SAICM delegates to take action, considering that SAICM's plan is for sustainable international chemicals management to be achieved globally by 2020, and if this first global phase-out date for leaded gasoline can be achieved this year, only one year (not two or three) after the original phase-out target date, then other SAICM target dates will gain the motivating factor that SAICM intended by setting target dates in the first place. The global phase-out of leaded petrol will rightly be applauded as the first great achievement of SAICM and specifically of the PCFV.

What toxics NGOs can do to speed up the phase-out:

Contact your national SAICM delegates and government and other Partners of the PCFV and especially contact the six people, to let them know you demand this phase-out. To date, the UK PM has been unresponsive to our request that he ban the export of TEL for MOGAS and Xstrata CEO's has been unresponsive to our request for their cooperation at the start of the supply chain of the lead in leaded petrol. But on 15 December 2011, the OECD National Contact Point who received our complaint about Innospec not abiding by the OECD's Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, rang to say that Innospec has decided not to participate in the mediation process available to companies and NGOs through the OECD. So we decided to write our sign-on letter to Innospec, and we thank all those organizations and individuals who signed on in time for it to be sent to Innospec on Friday 23rd December 2011.

What else can you do? Ask journalists to look in to the issue.

Let's prove that together, we have the power to put **people before profits**.