



Launch of lead-free Down Under Sinkers & Weights, Lead Week of Action Event 2018, Australia

by Elizabeth O'Brien of The LEAD Group and Dave McDougall of Down Under Sinkers

History was made in Sydney on Saturday 27th October 2018 when The LEAD Group, a health promotion and environmental charity, launched a range of lead-free fishing tackle made in Australia by Down Under Sinkers and Weights.

The lead-free fishing sinkers and weights only began to be sold by Perth-based manufacturer Dave McDougall during the sixth WHO International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action (ILPPWA) or "Lead Week of Action" (21st – 27th October 2018).



About Down Under Sinkers and Weights

We are a new start up business that is just coming out of Concept Development and starting to commercialize.

The concept was to be able to supply a cost-effective and user-friendly product that is Environmentally Inert and a suitable replacement for lead.

Neither The LEAD Group nor Down Under Sinkers have been able to obtain any official government statistics to date but the scariest findings we found in our research was that Western Australian fishers "could" legally be using and losing tons of lead sinkers and lead weights into the marine environment per week in peak fishing season with possibly 10-25% of the tonnage being "Black Market" sinkers, that is, home-made from scrap lead purchased (legally) from scrap metal merchants, and with no regulation of the Occupational Health and Safety, Community Safety or Environmental Safety.

The First problem we encountered was a suitable replacement for lead, as almost all metals and minerals on the periodic table that have a higher bulk density than lead are either toxic or excessively expensive.

The second problem was how do we make the sinkers comparable in price?

We settled on a steel shot and epoxy mix that has the benefits of being cost effective and has a reasonable bulk density, and that has the added benefits that the majority of the steel is encapsulated in resin and will rust (oxidize) 80 to 90% less than a plain steel sinker.



You can see the launch event listed in the List of Events at

http://www.who.int/ipcs/lead_campaign/events/en/ – the website of the World Health Organization.



1st business-organised Australian event for ILPPWA:
 Australian-made Lead-free sinkers are now available
 from davedownundersinkers@gmail.com 0400681393

LEAD Action NEWS

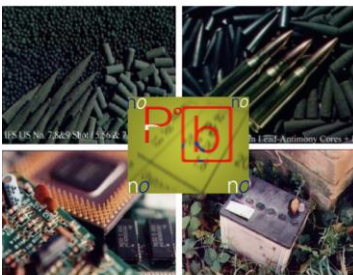
Left: DownUnderSinkers are made from environmentally inert steel shot & water-base epoxy resin, not cast-iron. **Below:** Fishes Artist: Jerrick Lin. Age 7. School Name: Creative Einstein Education (tutoring school). **Lead-Safety Message: Protect our fishes from the dangers of lead.** <https://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/two-fishes/>



Above: Launch of Down Under Sinkers at ASBB - Australasian Society of Building Biologists conference, slide from Presentation by Elizabeth O'Brien of The LEAD Group Inc charity.

At the Conference, The LEAD Group called for a ban on reselling of scrap lead by scrap metal dealers, to home-based sinker (and bullet) manufacturers.

The LEAD Group advocates for a ban on reselling of lead by scrap metal dealers e.g. to "pirate" home-based bullet and sinker-makers who then sell on eBay / Gumtree / Facebook etc.



Left: 2016 Volcano Art Prize (VAP) Entry. Photographer: Peter Hurley. Title: **Leaded ammo, ewaste and used lead acid battery.** Lead-safety Message: Recycle toxic lead waste safely! Never let it contaminate soil or be licked or ingested by animals - especially if it also contains toxic antimony like the bullets.

<http://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/leaded-ammo-ewaste-and-used-lead-acid-battery/> and 2012 VAP Entry. Artist: Dennis Leight. Title: **Pb - No Lead Squared.** Lead-Safety Message: Making electronics lead-free globally, will protect electronics workers, e-waste recyclers (including many child-labourers in Africa and Asia) and the environment from lead. <http://volcanoartprize.com/portfolio-item/pb/>



More about DownUnderSinkers



Left: Early Prototype after 8 weeks in salt solution of half cup of salt to 1 litre of water.

One of the other benefits is that this product will become encased with marine growth which will further slow leaching of Iron Oxide (rust) and will become part of the reef structure.

Our range is limited at the moment due to the cost of producing suitable moulding but we plan on increasing the range of sinkers to include all forms of fishing weight requirements with possible applications in the Oil and Gas Industry, Maritime and Aquaculture weight requirements. And if a child should ever swallow one of our sinkers (once we start making small ones), they will not be lead poisoned!

We are Very Happy to Be associated with The LEAD Group environmental health charity and we

will donate \$5 from the sale of our bulk pack sinkers to The LEAD Group's Lead Education and Abatement Fund (LEAF).

Our bulk packs are 20 x 460 gram snapper style sinkers, suitable for fishing 50 to 100 meters of water.

Competitively priced at \$85 ex-gst+ postage \$25

That is \$4.25 each and cheaper than most tackle shops.

We also offer Factory Direct Whole Sale pricing for Retailers and on-sellers.

For Orders Please contact Dave on:

Mobile 0400681393 or Email: davedownundersinkers@gmail.com

Mention LEADSAFE when ordering at <http://www.downundersinkers.com.au/> and we will donate \$5 from each sale to LEAF.