



The Lead Education and Abatement Design Group
Working to eliminate childhood and foetal lead poisoning
by the year 2012 and to protect the environment from lead
ABN 25 819 463 114

**MEDIA RELEASE - Tuesday 20th October 2009 -International Lead Poisoning Awareness Day
- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Time to help China prevent lead poisoning

At this, the start of International Lead Poisoning Awareness Week, Elizabeth O'Brien of The LEAD Group calls on all lead mining/smelting professionals to offer assistance to China in dealing with the catastrophe of China's environmental health policies and mismanagement of lead.

“Some 15,000 people living close to lead smelters in Henan province are about to be relocated, after nearly 1,000 children under 14 – roughly a third of those tested - were found to be lead poisoned. What guarantees are there that the 15 lead processing facilities that have been closed down recently, won't just set up in another community and repeat the whole cycle?”

“China has a history of radical tactics once a lead poisoning disaster gains the attention of international media,” says Ms O'Brien, “but the time for strong government is at the stage of setting up new facilities. If a company has been closed down for shocking pollution practices in one province, what is there to stop them going to another job-hungry community with the same outdated polluting equipment and cost-cutting practices?”

The biggest most experienced lead-mining and lead-smelting companies in the world, says Ms O'Brien, are members of a swag of international organisations, including the ILMC (International Lead Management Center), ILZRO (International Lead and Zinc Research Organization), ILZSG (International Lead and Zinc Study Group), ICMC (International Council on Mining and Metals) and the LDA (Lead Development Association International).

“These international organisations claim they care about lead stewardship, that is, eliminating unsafe mining and use of lead.

An example of lead stewardship is that of the CPSC (the US Consumer Product Safety Commission) this year is assisting China in applying existing regulations to eliminate lead from toys exported to the United States.”

“Australia – the world's largest lead exporter - Canada, the United States and United Kingdom are all vastly more experienced in creating and enforcing government policies and regulations on Occupational and Environmental Health in relation to lead management than China. They most surely can assist China ensure the protection of its people, particularly the children.”

See two new Global Lead Advice and Support Service (GLASS) factsheets by The LEAD Group: [The dangers of a blood lead level above 2 µg/dL and below 10 µg/dL](#) and [Blood lead testing: who to test, when, and how to respond to the result](#), (currently being translated into Chinese by a volunteer) as well as [Model National Public Health Policy on the Prevention of Lead Poisoning](#), also available in [Chinese](#).

Contact: Elizabeth O'Brien, The LEAD Group - +61 2 9716 0132, mobile +61 431 184 933 ###

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