

Ann Soiza
Assistant Director
Division of Occupational Safety and Health
Washington State Department of Labor & Industries
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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
DIV OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH

January 18, 2017

Dear Ms. Soiza:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of updating Washington State's occupational lead standards, which are intended to protect individuals from exposures to lead in the workplace:

- WAC 296-62-07521: General industry lead standard
- WAC 296-155-176: Lead in construction standard

Washington State's occupational lead standards have not been updated since the 1970s and are based on outdated scientific and medical information. Current data indicates that adverse health effects – including high blood pressure, decreased kidney function, reproductive effects and neurological impairments – are associated with exposure levels that are well below the existing standards.

To better protect the health of Washington State's workers and their families, we request that L&I update Washington's occupational lead standards. We strongly endorse Public Health Seattle & King County's June 2016 table of recommendations sent to your office.

As health professionals – including physicians, nurses, policymakers, nutritionists, health educators, environmental health specialists, administrators, and business leaders – we view efforts to reduce occupational lead exposure as a critical part of improving public health in Washington State.

We appreciate L&I's efforts to move forward with necessary revisions to the occupational lead standards, which will significantly improve the health of our state's workers and their families.

Sincerely,



Paj Nandi, MPH
President
Washington State Public Health Association