



# Leaded Fuel Use at Portland International Raceway

*Frequently asked questions and answers about leaded fuel use and impacts.*

## WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF LEAD EXPOSURE?

Lead can affect almost every organ and system in your body and children six years and younger are most susceptible to the effects of lead. Exposure to toxic levels of lead can lead to reproductive issues for pregnant women, cause delayed learning in children, and harm our natural ecosystems and the environment. Federal and state regulatory standards have helped reduce the amount of lead in air, drinking water, soil, consumer products, food, and occupational settings; however, preventing or reducing exposure is also important to lower health risks associated with lead.<sup>4</sup>

## WHO CAN I CONTACT TO FIND OUT THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION ABOUT LEAD?

The Environmental Protection Agency is the premier organization within the US government responsible for information about lead. Their regional contact information is: (States: AK, ID, OR, WA)

**U.S. EPA Region 10**  
**Prevention and Materials Management Unit**  
**(PAMMU)**  
**(AWT-128)**  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, Washington 98101  
206-553-6697

**Maria Tartaglia, Outreach, [tartaglia.maria@epa.gov](mailto:tartaglia.maria@epa.gov)**

1. <https://www.epa.gov/air-pollution-transportation/timeline-major-accomplishments-transportation-air-pollution-and-climate>
2. <https://archive.epa.gov/epa/aboutepa/epa-takes-final-step-phaseout-leaded-gasoline.html>
3. <https://www.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead>
4. <https://www.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead>



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Commissioner Amanda Fritz  
Director Mike Abbate



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**While the U.S. Clean Air Act of 1996 banned the sale of leaded fuel for on-road vehicles, it is still permitted for other uses. Leaded fuel is in use throughout the U.S. in high octane racing fuels, off-road vehicles and non-vehicles, diesel fuels and aviation fuels<sup>1</sup>.**

According to standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency<sup>2</sup>, leaded fuel is used at less than 40% of motorized events at Portland International Raceway (PIR). In 2016 there were 305 motorized events, 122 of these included vehicles that may have used leaded fuel (some vehicles in these races use leaded fuel and some don't). Below are some frequently asked questions and answers—if you have additional questions about activities at PIR, please contact us at (503) 823-RACE (7223) or email at [pir@gov](mailto:pir@gov)

#### **WHAT IS LEAD AND WHERE IS IT FOUND?**

Lead is a naturally occurring element found in small amounts in the earth's crust. While it has some beneficial uses, it can be toxic to humans and animals causing of health effects. Lead can be found in all parts of our environment – the air, the soil, the water, and even inside our homes. Much of our exposure comes from human activities including the use of fossil fuels including past use of leaded gasoline, some types of industrial facilities, and past use of lead-based paint in homes.

#### **WHY DOES PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION ALLOW SOME LEADED FUEL AT PIR?**

High performance engines, vintage engines, some motorcycles and some other racing vehicles utilize lead in very small amounts to maximize performance. Because limited exposure to leaded fuel in these smaller amounts is in accordance with EPA standards, PP&R believes our responsibility includes ensuring

our patrons are aware of the use of leaded fuel and that you have information for you to educate yourself. When leaded fuel is in use at the track, visitors and spectators will see signs posted. Additionally, event organizers who rent PIR and are allowing the use of leaded fuel are also responsible for distributing this flyer and other information to vendors, participants and attendees.

#### **HOW MANY EVENTS INCLUDE USE OF LEADED GASOLINE EACH YEAR?**

In 2016 there were 555 total events at PIR. Only 112 of those are motorized events where vehicles may use leaded fuel. PIR is a rental venue used for a wide variety of activities, only some of which involve vehicle racing. In 2016, 250 events at PIR are either non-motorized vehicle events, including bicycling, runs and walks, swap meets, movie nights, holiday lights, and others, or included street vehicles. 193 events included vehicles that drive on our public roadways to get to PIR which are required by federal law to use unleaded fuel.

#### **WHEN WILL PP&R HAVE SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON HOW LEADED FUEL AFFECTS AIR QUALITY AT AND AROUND PIR?**

During 2017 PIR will survey and capture, from all vendors, how much leaded fuel is in use. Until now, since its inception, PIR has never captured fuel statistics. During 2016 we were able to find out from vendors that demand for leaded fuel is in decline, however for certain categories of events it is necessary. For example, they note during one of these events, Portland Vintage Racing Weekend, the ratio of unleaded to leaded fuel sold was 7:1 (the engine of unmodified vintage cars require leaded fuel to operate properly).

#### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'M CONCERNED ABOUT MY OR MY CHILD'S EXPOSURE TO LEAD?**

Talk to your pediatrician, general physician, or local health agency about what you can do. Your doctor can do a simple blood test to check you or your child for lead exposure. You may also want to test your home for sources of lead.<sup>3</sup>