Shared learning

15/03/2023

Lead paint found on generator while grinding

An employee who was performing grinding work on a generator rotor came across lead paint whilst grinding. It was with luck and due to a personal decision, he was wearing an air-fed mask - this was not an identified control.

It was noted that there could be exposure to lead paint in other places during the outage, so it was added onto the Haz ID and discussed at the morning toolbox.

Engineers expressed that the lead paint is not only present on the rotor, but that it is likely on other parts of the generator and other areas of the machines.

- A similar occurrence happened previously on another site, but no controls was put in place to manage this hazard in an ongoing basis.
- The lead paint is also described in the manufacturer's specs, which we weren't aware of before the event occurred.
- The hazard has been added into the sites generic hazard register, although it was identified that this document is rarely used during planning of work.

Ideas being explored include (but not limited to):

- Attaching the manufacturers hazard documentation to the area's functional location where we know its present (in SAP). That would automatically produce the hazard document in the work packs.
- Sticking QR code labels onto the machine itself where the hazard is present to link that back to the manufacturer's documents.

Lead-based paint and contaminated dust, can be a common sources of exposure if not managed appropriately. Symptoms include abdominal pain, neurological changes and irritability.

At very high levels, it can be fatal.