Many solder materials contain lead, a hazardous material. This Fact Sheet is designed to provide information for the safe handling of this product.

Assume that all solder contains lead unless:

- It specifically says “lead free” on the spool
- The Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) says it does not contain lead

If you have lead-containing solder, here’s what we need you to do:

The first step is to see if a non-lead product will work for your needs. If so, buy it! Then turn in the lead-containing product as a hazardous waste and EH&S will dispose of it safely (and legally!) at no charge to you. To request a waste pick-up, go to: http://www.cmu.edu/ehs/waste-environment/index.html and request a pick-up from the link in the beige box on the right.

This is the easiest and best thing to do!

If you need to use a lead-containing solder for your work, please observe the following guidelines:

1. Handle the solder with protective gloves. Any thin, disposable glove will do. When handling solder without gloves, the lead can remain on your hands and you may then ingest it later when you eat something!
2. Perform all soldering in a well-ventilated area, preferable with a dedicated exhaust system for the work.
3. Never place your head directly over the soldering activity as the vapors will rise upward.
4. Dispose of your gloves after your work and wash your hands thoroughly after each solder use.
5. A respirator should NOT be needed for this work, but if you are concerned about your exposure, please contact us at 412-268-8182.
6. You MUST complete Hazard Communication training before working with any hazardous material, including any lead-containing product. THIS IS AN OSHA REQUIREMENT. If you have NOT had this training, contact us at 412-268-8182.
7. Additional general soldering safety information is available on the EH&S web page under “Chemical Safety—Forms, Policies and Procedures.”

1 If you asked “what’s an MSDS?” go to http://www.cmu.edu/ehs/msds/index.html