



## Sheet Metal Safety

Sheet metal, mainly used in roofing for roofing gutters, downspouts, and standing seam roofing, exposes you to several unique hazards.

☞ **You must always be aware of the sharp edges on sheet metal.**

- Use extreme caution and always wear gloves when handling sheet metal.
- Keep sharp edges and corners away from walking areas.
- Hand cut edges are especially sharp; filing or grinding burrs, or hemming the edge will lessen this type of hazard.

☞ **Some sheet metal is lead-coated, which presents another concern.**

- Lead is a poison that, after excessive exposure, can be stored in your body.
- If exposure to lead is an issue in your workplace make sure you take proper precautions and that you become familiar with your company's lead policies and procedures.
- Whenever handling lead products, always wear gloves and wash thoroughly before eating, drinking or smoking because it's easy to accidentally ingest lead that may be on your hands.
- Don't take breaks or eat in areas where lead is present.

☞ **When soldering, additional safety precautions should be followed.**

- Personal protective equipment (PPE), including eye protection, gloves, and long sleeve shirts should be worn.
- Have a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Always try to work upwind or use a fan to dissipate lead fumes, that will be generated from heating the material, so that you don't inhale them.

☞ **When using power machine tools, machine guarding must be used.**

- Make sure machine guards are in working order whenever using power machine tools such as press brakes or shears.

Sheet metal and the machines used to form it present unique hazards not normally seen in other roofing applications. Take extra time and care when working with sheet metal and sheet metal forming equipment so you don't get bent out of shape!

### *Sheet Metal Safety Training Tips*

- Have some pieces of sheet metal available to demonstrate how sharp it is, especially when it has hand cut edges.
- With a white rag, wipe a piece of lead-coated sheet metal to show how easily lead rubs off of the sheet metal and onto hands or clothes.
- Ask the following questions:
  - Why is important to have machine guards?
  - How can lead get into your body?