



# Adhesive & Lead-Free Wheel Weights

Last Updated: 2019

*Wheel weights attached to tire rims during wheel balancing maintenance are commonly made of lead. Lead exposure can affect every organ in your body, and is most recognized for causing permanent damage to the brain. Lead wheel weights used in tire balancing at auto shops remain one of the largest ongoing uses and releases of lead into the environment in the United States. Lead wheel weights significantly contribute to lead pollution when they fall off cars and end up in storm drains or on the street. Luckily, there are readily available safer alternatives such as zinc alloy or steel.*

## Managing wheel weights

Assume that the weights on any incoming car you service are made out of lead. Not only is it important that you protect yourself while working with lead wheel weights, but you should make an effort to collect and properly dispose of the ones that you remove from your customer's cars. This means you should always wear gloves while working with the weights and immediately wash your hands right afterward. Be sure that all wheel weights get recycled or disposed of as hazardous waste. Never dispose of a wheel weight in the trash.

## Switch to safer wheel weight alternatives

We encourage you to eliminate your use of lead wheel weights by moving to adhesive non-lead wheel weights that do not pose a risk and are more likely to stay on the tires. Adhesive weights are easily dispensed and measured on a flexible adhesive tape roll, so you have the added benefit of not having various sizes of weights sitting around your shop.

Some states, including [New York](#), [Vermont](#) and [Maine](#) have passed regulations to ban the use of lead wheel weights. By eliminating your use of lead wheel weights now, you will not only be ahead of the regulatory game but you will be supplying a healthier work environment for your employees and their children, and a safer community.

## Take the Next Step

### Talk to a supplier

- Adhesive non-lead wheel weight manufacturers include [3M](#), [BADA](#), and [Perfect Equipment](#).
- [View a list of companies that supply both lead-free adhesive and clip-on wheel weights.](#)

**Contact the Office of Technical Assistance (OTA):** OTA's Tiffany Skogstrom (617-626-1086) and Marina Gayl (617-626-1077) have expertise in auto shop environmental safety. They can offer free and confidential assistance and advice.

## Find Additional Information

- [Lead-Free Wheels 2012 Reference Materials](#) by the Ecology Center
- [Stock and Flows of Lead-Based Wheel Weights in the United States](#) by the US Geological Survey

## Success Stories

[Salcedo Auto Center](#) in Jamaica Plain, MA, successfully eliminated 83 lbs of lead from the environment by switching to lead-free adhesive wheel weights.

Nationally, [major car and tire manufacturers](#) have joined the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Lead-Free Wheel Weight Initiative by pledging to eliminate their use of lead-wheel weight.

**For free and confidential technical assistance or questions, contact:**  
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