WALL ST. JOURNAL
MARCH 7, 1988

Smelting Company Settles OSHA Case On Lead Exposure

By ALBERT R. KARR
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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OSHA last month proposed penalties totaling $2.8 million against Doe Run, alleging 313 violations at the smelter, including 283 willful violations.

In a statement, Doe Run said the reduced payment in the settlement "supports our position that we were not and do not deliberately jeopardize the health or safety of our employees."

In San Francisco, a Homestake spokesman declined to comment on the matter, saying "the settlement speaks for itself."

Separately, OSHA said it has asked the Justice Department to consider bringing criminal charges against Texstar Construction Corp., San Antonio, Texas, an important subcontractor for a Bridgeport, Conn., apartment complex that collapsed last April. The collapse of the twin-tower L'Ambience Plaza project killed 28 workers and injured 10 others, and was the worst construction accident this decade.

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Orange County Register
Sat. March 5, 1988

Doe Run to pay $1.25 million OSHA fine

By Matt Yancey
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Missouri smelting plant partly owned by the Fluor Corp. agreed Friday to pay a $1.25 million fine to settle charges that it fired workers with high levels of lead in their blood to sidestep federally required medical leaves.

The Doe Run Co. of Herculaneum agreed to pay the reduced fine less than a month after the Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited it for 177 alleged health violations — 147 of them classified as being in willful disregard of the law.

John Fitzsimmons, the company's division manager, said the 55 percent reduction in the $2.78 million fine originally sought by the agency "supports our position that we were not and do not deliberately jeopardize the health or safety of our employees."

The terms of the settlement, the second largest collected by the agency in its 27-year history, were announced simultaneously by OSHA officials in Washington and Doe Run officials in St. Louis.

The 500-employee lead smelting plant, a joint venture of Irvine-based Fluor and Homestake Mining Co. of San Francisco, is about 30 miles south of St. Louis.

Assistant Labor Secretary and OSHA Administrator John Pendergrass said the company also agreed to correct several hazards cited by the agency and pay back wages to temporary contract workers allegedly "rotated" out of their jobs because of high lead levels in their blood.

OSHA had accused the company of using the practice to sidestep a law requiring employees with excessive lead blood levels to be removed from lead-contaminated areas with full preservation of pay and benefits for up to 18 months.

"This agreement achieves OSHA's objectives, and it does it effectively without the delays and expenses of litigation," Pendergrass said. "The company will correct the hazards, cover the back pay problem and pay one of the largest penalties in OSHA's history."

The only larger fine ever collected by OSHA was $1.5 million last July from the Chrysler Corp. for alleged health and safety violations at some of its auto assembly plants.

Wall Street Journal
Friday, February 12, 1988

OSHA to Fine Venture of Fluor And Homestake

By Albert R. Karr
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WASHINGTON—The Labor Department proposed fines of $2.8 million against Doe Run Co., a joint venture of St. Joe Minerals Corp. and Homestake Mining Co., on charges of violating federal health and safety standards at a lead smelter.

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OSHA cited Doe Run for 177 health violations, mainly involving exposure to lead, and 136 instances of failing to record occupational injuries, including lacerations, fractures, burns and eye injuries.

The proposed penalties are among the largest OSHA has sought against any employer. The agency is also seeking back pay and benefits for certain contract workers who OSHA said were overexposed to lead and replaced by new workers. St. Joe Minerals, Clayton, Mo., is a unit of Fluor Corp., Irvine, Calif., and Homestake Mining is based in San Francisco.

"Doe Run's continuing disregard for complying with the spirit and the letter of the OSHA lead standard and for guarding the health of its work force is unacceptable," said Frank White, deputy assistant secretary of labor and OSHA's enforcement chief.

The joint venture, in a prepared release, said it would "move quickly to correct any situation that could threaten worker health or safety" at the smelter. But Doe Run added that it considers many of OSHA's charges "unwarranted," and denied disregarding either the spirit or letter of the OSHA law. It called most of the cases "paperwork violations," and said others "involve legitimate differences of opinion over highly technical matters."

Doe Run said that "our record on worker health and safety is outstanding, and we intend to keep it that way." A Homestake official said that "we stand behind" the Doe Run statement. A spokesman for Fluor declined to comment beyond the Doe Run release.

OSHA said that Doe Run violated part of nearly every section of its lead standard, including provisions governing lead-exposure monitoring, engineering controls, biological monitoring, medical monitoring, hygiene facilities, removal of employees from hazardous work for medical reasons and respirator protection.

The agency said Doe Run rotated contract employees in and out of high-lead areas to minimize levels of lead in their blood, replacing workers when their levels rose above OSHA-set maximums. OSHA said this policy failed to meet its requirement that employees with excessive amounts of lead in their blood be removed from high-lead areas and guaranteed their pay and benefits for up to 18 months while their blood-lead levels return to normal.

No accrual made in FY87 for liability.

Daily American Republic
Friday, February 12, 1988
Poplar Bluff, Mo.

Lead Smelting Plant Fined $2.9 Million

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Missouri smelting plant accused of exposing workers to high levels of lead and firing them to sidestep government medical leave requirements is facing the third-largest fine ever levied by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

OSHA levied the $2.78 million fine Thursday against Doe Run Co.'s lead smelting operation at Herculaneum, Mo., about 30 miles south of St. Louis., saying inspections uncovered violations of "virtually every section of the OSHA lead standard."

Doe Run recently earned a favorable initial report from the U.S. Forest Service after it applied to begin lead minining in Mark Twain National Forest near the Eleven Point River and Ozark National Scenic Riverways. The plan calls for encompassing 120,000 acres in Carter, Shannon and Oregon counties and has been bitterly protested by environmentalists from across the state.

Doe Run, a joint venture of the Homestake Mining Co. of San Francisco and the Fluor Corp. of Irvine, Calif., has 15 days to contest the citations and proposed penaities before a three-member independent review board.

John Fitzsimmons, the company's division manager, said he was surprised by the size of the fine and believes many of the charges are unwarranted.

"We've had no health citations from OSHA for over 10 years and we've spent $20 million in making the smelter safer for workers," Fitzsimmons said. "We thought we might get a slap on the wrist, and they hit us over the head with a sledgehammer."

The company was cited for 177 health violations, 147 of them classified as being in willful disregard of the law. It also was accused of 186 recordkeeping violations in not reporting on-the-job injuries in 1985 and 1986, and 18 instances of failing to correct hazards previously cited by the agency.

The citations arose out of an OSHA health inspection of the 500-employee plant last June. The inspection was intended to determine if the plant had installed previously agreed-upon engineering controls to limit worker exposure to lead, a poison that can cause severe damage to the kidneys and nervous system.

The biggest fine ever levied by OSHA was $5.1 million against contractors for a Bridgeport, Conn., apartment building that collapsed last April, killing 28 construction workers, and $4.2 million against Bath Iron Works of Bath, Maine, last November. Both are being contested.

The Register
Friday, February 12, 1988

Jim L.

OSHA slaps $2.8 million fine against Fluor plant

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal agency fined a Missouri smelting plant partly owned by Fluor Corp. $2.78 million on Thursday, accusing it of exposing workers to high levels of lead and then firing them to sidestep government medical leave requirements.

It was the third-largest fine levied by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration

The agency cited the Doe Run Co. for 177 health violations — 147 of them classified as willful disregard of the law and workers' safety — at its lead smelting plant in Herculaneum, Mo., about 30 miles south of St. Louis.

The company also was accused of 136 recordkeeping violations in not reporting on-the-job injuries in 1985 and 1986, and 13 instances of failing to correct hazards previously cited by the agency.

Doe Run is a joint venture of Fluor and the Homestake Mining Co. of San Francisco. Rick Maslin, spokesman for Irvine-based Fluor, said the company couldn't comment until it had a chance to see the OSHA charges.

Doe Run has 15 days to contest the fine before a three-member independent review board.

John Fitzsimmons, Doe Run division manager, said he believes many of the charges are unwarranted.

OSHA spokesman Terry Mikelson said that, among other violations, "Investigators found that Doe Run would request new personnel from a contractor once blood-lead levels for current contract hirees exceeded OSHA requirements — in essence firing workers with high blood(-lead) levels."

The practice, Mikelson said, sidestepped OSHA medical protections which require employees with excessive lead blood levels to be removed from lead-contaminated areas with full preservation of pay and benefits for up to 18 months.

OSHA will seek back wages and benefits due the fired workers in amounts yet to be determined, Mikelson said.

Register staff writer Judith L. Bren-

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LLineberger	-H9D
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LFisher	-H8C
LHart	-A4K
EParente	-A4K
COliver	-A4C
JZakaryan	-D1L
PVanNort	Greenville
MBurnette	Greenville
CBryan	Houston
JStein	Greenville
PVarello	Greenville
RDean	Greenville

cc: STAFF

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winning the World Sprint Championships in West Allis, Wisc., and seemed to be a lock to medal at Calgary in either the 500 or 1,000.

But his 500 race had scarcely begun when his left foot went out from under him, and he slipped going into the first turn.

In the 1,000, the edge of Jansen's right skate blade caught the ice half a lap from the finish line. His right leg buckled and he was down, sliding on the ice. What made the mishap so painful for Jansen was the fact that he had clocked the fastest splits of the night for 200 and 600 meters for the first four heats and appeared to be on his way to a medal.

"I felt really good through the whole thing," said Jansen. "I was smooth coming out of the 800 mark. I felt very strong. I put my right skate down, caught the outer edge and I was down."

He said as he sat on the ice, his mind was virtually blank. "I don't know what I thought," he said. "I

Jansen in the fourth and Mey in the fifth.

"Jansen is quite good," said Goullaev through an interpreter. "If he had not fallen I still could have won one of the medals. It's difficult to say which one because there is so slight a difference between first and third."

U.S. track and field athletes Jim Ryun and Mary Decker Slaney also fell in Olympic races, Ryun in a 1,500 heat in Munich, West Germany, in 1972 and Slaney in the 3,000 final in 1984 in Los Angeles.

Of his two falls in Calgary, Jansen said, "It can happen to anybody. Every skater knows what happens when your blade catches the ice and you can't roll the blade over."

Jansen said he will return to Calgary after the funeral to see Greiner compete next week.

The 1,000 was Jansen's last chance for an Olympic medal at Calgary. The United States is still looking for its first speed skating medal here and its first since 1980.

Mining Firm, OSHA Talk Over Problems

Officials of the Doe Run lead mining company met with federal job-safety representatives and Teamsters for more than six hours Wednesday to hash over health and safety citations at the company's lead smelting plant in Herculaneum.

Last week, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration levied a $2.87 million fine against the company after citing its lead smelting operation for more than 300 violations. The fine was the third-largest ever imposed by the agency.

Company officials dispute the allegations.

On Thursday, company and union officials expressed optimism that they could quickly agree how to resolve the issues. Officials of the agency refused to speculate on the outcome of the talks. In similar cases, the agency often has agreed to reduce or eliminate fines when companies try to correct the problems.

The company has until March 4 to contest any of the violations. If the company and the agency fail to reach an agreement by then, an administrative law judge will hear the case. The company could appeal the judge's decision in federal court.

Senator

From page one

erything I've had into it."

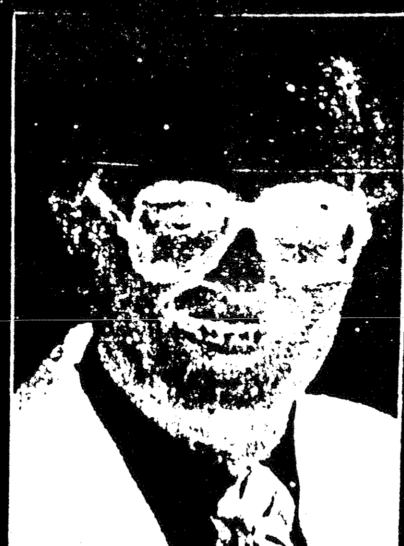
Legislation that came to a vote in Schneider's absences included a proposal for a constitutional amendment aimed at keeping Missouri's lottery from failing, and a bill to provide state money for a football stadium in St. Louis.

One day last week, Sen. J.B. "Jet" Banks, D-St. Louis, stood in the Senate chambers and asked permission to introduce a special guest — a routine ceremony in the Senate. The "special guest" was Schneider, and after his introduction, senators gave him a round of applause.

Because of the way attendance records are kept, determining exactly what days Schneider was present in the Senate is difficult.

Records show that Schneider has been counted absent with leave for nine days and present for 18 days. But he seldom has been seen in the Senate chambers.

A senator does not have to appear in the Senate chambers or even be in the state Capitol for most of the day to be counted as present, said Terry Spieler, Senate secretary.



Sen. John D. Schneider
"had to do what I've had to do"

Schneider said he had kept in touch with the vice chairman of the Judiciary Committee about legislation before that panel. The vice chairman, Sen. Harry Wiggins, D-Kansas City, said Thursday that he had presided over most of the Judiciary Committee's hearings.

But Schneider said he was familiar with the legislation presented to the

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Lead Free Ozarks. They say mining is a threat to water resources, human health and the beauty of the area.

The area that is targeted for prospecting — and ultimately mining —

OSHA Fines Won't Affect Mine Ruling

Health and safety violations at the Doe Run Mining Co.'s lead smelter will have no effect on the company's chances of getting a permit to prospect for lead in the Mark Twain National Forest, company executives and federal officials agree.

The mining company agreed Thursday to pay $1.25 million in fines imposed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and to take steps to improve health and safety conditions at the company's lead smelter at Herculaneum, 25 miles south of St. Louis.

OSHA accused the company of failing to report injuries, of exposing workers to unsafe levels of lead and of firing some employees when their blood levels of lead became too high. The company has agreed to change its practices and to provide employees with better respirators until it installs a system to remove airborne lead from the buildings at the smelter.

The smelter has also come under fire for lead emissions that were four times the national standard in 1986, according to a report made public recently by the Environmental Protection Agency. Herculaneum has one of the nation's highest levels of airborne lead, EPA records show.

Jack Krokroskia, manager of Doe Run's mining operations, said: "I don't draw a parallel between OSHA's actions on the smelter and the issue of whether Doe Run should be allowed to prospect. A smelter isn't the issue."

John Woerheide, a spokesman for the U.S Forest Service in Rolla, agreed. "I don't think it will affect the decision since (the smelter and the mine and mill) are different operations. But a lot of people would make that connection."

One of the people who make that connection is Roger Pryor, a spokesman for the Coalition for the Environment and one of many opponents of the mining proposal.

"The question is whether Doe Run could be a good neighbor in Winona when it has shown itself to be a bad neighbor in Herculaneum," Pryor said.

— Christine Bertelson

2 Juveniles Charged In South Side Fires

NEWS ANA

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1988

Action By OSHA:

Fine, Cl
Surpris

By Marcia L. Koenig
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

HERCULANEUM

WORKERS AT the Doe Run Co. smelter in Herculaneum, the nation's largest lead smelter, have mixed reactions about the hundreds of charges brought against the company last week by a federal safety agency.

Ron Herrington — the chief shop steward for the Teamsters Union at the plant and a member of the safety committee — was surprised at the charges by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

The agency slapped Doe Run with a fine of $2.78 million, the third-largest ever levied by the agency.

"I just can't understand this. We do lock horns once in a while," he said. But, he added, the differences usually are settled amicably. "The company usually takes an extra step" in safety measures, Herrington said.

But two men leaving the plant at the 3 p.m. shift change Friday said they thought the citations were overdue.

"They've let a lot of stuff slide for years," one of the men said. The workers refused to give their names, saying they feared reprisals.

"They say they comply" with standards, the worker said of the company. "But there is definite truth in the citation," he said.

He said he thought employees who showed high levels of lead in their blood should not be exposed to any lead while their body recovered. Instead, he said, the company merely shifted such workers to lower exposure areas.

In the company's defense, the men said they did not believe that any workers ever had been fired because of high concentrations of lead in their blood.

That contradicts one of the charges brought by the agency — that the company hired contract workers, exposed them to high levels of lead and then fired them when the lead in their blood exceeded federal standards.

John E. FitzSimmons, manager of the company's smelting division, said the contract workers were brought in when extra hands were needed for special projects and peak work times.

FitzSimmons denied that the temporary workers were treated as disposable employees.

"It sounds like we bring them in and flush them out," he said.

The contractors work primarily in the Doe Run railway division, FitzSimmons said. "They will be exposed from time to time, but in general, the rail area is low exposure," he said.

The company has its workers tested every two months for lead in the blood, he said. Workers are given physicals annually.

Tom Griffith is a service foreman for the company, as well as the mayor of Herculaneum. One of his duties at Doe Run is to keep an eye on the records of lead levels in employees. He said company officials were doing everything they could to keep lead levels down. Ten people now work in areas of low exposure because the lead levels in their blood got too high, he said.

"The plant is in better shape than ever in history as far as keeping blood (lead) levels down," Griffith said.

FitzSimmons said the level of lead in employees had dropped by 40 percent since 1980 and dipped 12 percent last year.

"Our safety and health record has dramatically improved," he said. He said the large fine against Doe Run
is "putting us in the le
places (that) kill people."
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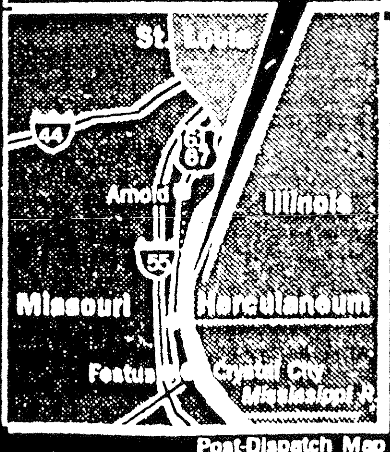
While the smelter has su
livelihood for generations

Tom Griffith
"The plant is in better shape"

Site of Doe Run Co.



Post-Dispatch Map

Workers at the Doe Run Co. smelter in Herculaneum c

ANALYSIS SECTION B
DAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1988

Fine, Charges At Smelter In Herculaneum Surprise Officials But Not Some Workers

Sam Leone/Post-Dispatch

Co. smelter in Herculaneum on their way to clean up before heading home at the end of their shift.

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is "putting us in the league with places (that) kill people."

Doe Run's employees are aware of the health threat posed by the lead at the plant.

Medical experts say that prolonged exposure to lead can damage the central nervous system, the liver, the kidneys, the urinary system and the reproductive system.

But some Doe Run workers say they have too many years of seniority built up to leave. The smelting plant is a major employer in the area. About 200 of its 500 employees come from Herculaneum and the nearby towns of Festus and Crystal City.

The 2,200 residents of Herculaneum, about 25 miles south of St. Louis, have a love-hate relationship with the plant, which sits on 40 acres along the Mississippi River.

While the smelter has supplied a livelihood for generations in Herculaneum and has supported the town through taxes, some residents complain about fumes and vibrations from truck traffic to and from the plant.

The company has tried to work with municipal officials on such problems. For example, the company has increased the use of railroads, rather than trucks, for bringing in lead concentrate and shipping out pure lead.

"We are totally involved with the community," FitzSimmons said.

The company sponsors softball teams and contributes to clubs and organizations in town. Doe Run also owns smaller parcels of land within Herculaneum, parcels that the company leases at no cost to the municipality for a firehouse, ball fields and other uses.

The mayor estimated that the company pays $200,000 a year in local taxes. The company also is contributing about $300,000 toward the expansion of the local sewer system.

"If we lost them, we'd be in bad shape," Griffith said. "Doe Run is the city's biggest source of revenue."

The smelter has operated continuously since 1892. Until 1986, the plant was known as the St. Joe Lead Co. Doe Run is a joint venture between the St. Joe Minerals Corp. and the Homestake Mining Co. Doe Run has six mines, four mills and two smelters, although the one in Herculaneum is the only active one.

FitzSimmons said he hoped to provide information to the federal safety agency in the next few weeks, information that would settle the agency's differences with the company.

"They don't need to do it this way. We don't need this kind of smacking," he said. "All they have to do is tell us what they expect, and we'll

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John Fitzsimmons, the company's division manager, said he was surprised by the size of the fine and believes many of the charges are unwarranted.

"We've had no health citations from OSHA for over 10 years and we've spent $20 million in making the smelter safer for workers," Fitzsimmons said. "We thought we might get a slap on the wrist, and they hit us over the head with a sledgehammer."

The company was cited for 177 health violations, 147 of them classified as being in willful disregard of the law. It also was accused of 186 recordkeeping violations in not reporting on-the-job injuries in 1985 and 1986, and 18 instances of failing to correct hazards previously cited by the agency.

The citations arose out of an OSHA health inspection of the 500-employee plant last June. The inspection was intended to determine if the plant had installed previously agreed-upon engineering controls to limit worker exposure to lead, a poison that can cause severe damage to the kidneys and nervous system.

The biggest fine ever levied by OSHA was $5.1 million against contractors for a Bridgeport, Conn., apartment building that collapsed last April, killing 28 construction workers, and $4.2 million against Bath Iron Works of Bath, Maine, last November. Both are being contested.

OSHA slaps $2.8 million fine against Fluor plant

The Register
Friday, February 12, 1988

Jim L.

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal agency fined a Missouri smelting plant partly owned by Fluor Corp. $2.78 million on Thursday, accusing it of exposing workers to high levels of lead and then firing them to sidestep government medical leave requirements.

It was the third-largest fine levied by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration

The agency cited the Doe Run Co. for 177 health violations — 147 of them classified as willful disregard of the law and workers' safety — at its lead smelting plant in Herculaneum, Mo., about 30 miles south of St. Louis.

The company also was accused of 136 recordkeeping violations in not reporting on-the-job injuries in 1985 and 1986, and 13 instances of failing to correct hazards previously cited by the agency.

Doe Run is a joint venture of Fluor and the Homestake Mining Co. of San Francisco. Rick Maslin, spokesman for Irvine-based Fluor, said the company couldn't comment until it had a chance to see the OSHA charges.

Doe Run has 15 days to contest the fine before a three-member independent review board.

John Fitzsimmons, Doe Run division manager, said he believes many of the charges are unwarranted.

OSHA spokesman Terry Mikelson said that, among other violations, "Investigators found that Doe Run would request new personnel from a contractor once blood-lead levels for current contract hirees exceeded OSHA requirements — in essence firing workers with high blood(-lead) levels."

The practice, Mikelson said, sidestepped OSHA medical protections which require employees with excessive lead blood levels to be removed from lead-contaminated areas with full preservation of pay and benefits for up to 18 months.

OSHA will seek back wages and benefits due the fired workers in amounts yet to be determined, Mikelson said.

Register staff writer Judith L. Bren-

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DSTappan	-HOA
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LLineberger	-H9D
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LFisher	-H8C
LHart	-A4K
EParente	-A4K
COliver	-A4C
JZakaryan	-D1L
PVanNort	Greenville
MBurnette	Greenville
CBryan	Houston
JStein	Greenville
PVarello	Greenville
RDean	Greenville

cc: STAFF

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OSHA Fines Lead Plant In Missouri

By Bob Adams 2/12/88
Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON — The federal job safety agency fined the Doe Run Co. of St. Louis $2.78 million on Thursday for what the agency said were 313 health and safety violations at the company's lead smelter at Herculaneum, Mo.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration levied the fine — the third largest ever imposed by the agency, a spokesman said.

The agency said the facility had "violated some provision of virtually every section of the OSHA lead standard." The smelter formerly was known as St. Joe Lead Co.

The safety agency accused the company of hiring contract workers, exposing them to dangerous levels of lead and firing them when the lead levels in their blood rose beyond the federal safety standard.

The company has 15 working days to appeal the fines to an independent agency called the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

James E. FitzSimmons, manager of the smelting division of Doe Run, said

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OSHA

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the company would sit down with OSHA officials and try to work out the problems before deciding whether to appeal.

But he disputed the allegations.

In a press release and in a telephone interview, FitzSimmons denied that the company had fired contract employees after the lead levels in their blood became elevated.

FitzSimmons said most of the charges were "paperwork violations." He said others involved disagreements with the agency on technical matters or lack of clarity by the agency about the rules.

"There were no people at risk," FitzSimmons said.

FitzSimmons said the company would move quickly to correct any violations. He said the firm had been surprised by the size of the fine and the number of violations alleged by the agency.

"They hit us with a sledgehammer," FitzSimmons declared. "We don't believe the facts justify the size of the fine. Our record on worker health and safety is outstanding and we intend to keep it that way."

Terry Mikelson, a spokesman for OSHA, said the agency was seeking back pay and benefits for the contract workers who the agency believes were overexposed and then replaced.

He said that the exact number of workers involved was undetermined but that it could be as many as 60 over a period of several months. About 500 workers are employed at the smelting plant at Herculaneum, 25 miles south of St. Louis.

Mikelson said the fine sought from Doe Run was the third largest in the history of OSHA. The largest was $5.11 million levied against the L'Ambiance Plaza Apartment Complex in Bridgeport, Conn., last November, after 28 people perished in the collapse of a building.

Osha's formal citation charges that Doe Run had:

- Rotated "contract" employees in what OSHA alleges are 14 violations and fined $8,500, but Mikelson said that none of the violations by Merit had been intentional.

OSHA said that Doe Run would request new workers when contract employees developed excessive levels of lead in their blood — "in essence, firing workers with high blood lead levels."

The agency said this procedure "sidestepped the medical removal protections" that require employees with excessive lead levels to be removed from contaminated areas and to have their pay and benefits preserved for up to 18 months.

Frank White, deputy assistant secretary of labor and OSHA's chief enforcement officer, said that "Doe Run's continuing disregard for complying with the spirit and the letter of the OSHA lead standard and for guarding the health of its work force is unacceptable."

Medical experts say that overexposure to lead can damage the central nervous system, the liver, the kidneys, the urinary system and the reproductive system.

Mikelson said he was unsure whether specific health problems resulting from overexposure had been documented. "We only know that workers were overexposed," he said.

Mikelson said that OSHA had imposed a high fine because "this would be considered an egregious situation in which the company willfully violated the standards and regulations." He said the large number of violations that were alleged also was a factor.

OSHA defines a "willful" violation as one in which an employer either knows that a condition constituted a violation, or is aware that a hazardous condition existed and fails to try to correct it.

The agency said 147 health violations cited against Doe Run were willful, as were 136 failures to record injuries that OSHA alleged. The agency alleged 30 other less serious violations.

OSHA said it began its inspection of the smelter in Herculaneum last June to see if the company had installed previously agreed-upon controls on workers' exposure to lead.