

DELEADING

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National Gallery of Art Uses Lead Barrier Compound to Abate Lead Paint Problem

Museum's Major Renovation Project Required Large-Scale Decontamination Work

The National Gallery of Art (NGA) in Washington, DC, is one of the country's most distinguished museums. Each year over five million people visit the gallery to view the world famous exhibits that it houses. Currently, the museum is undergoing a major face lift, and you might not ever know it.

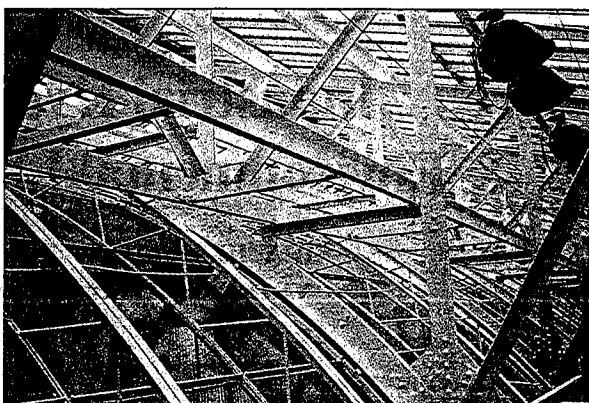
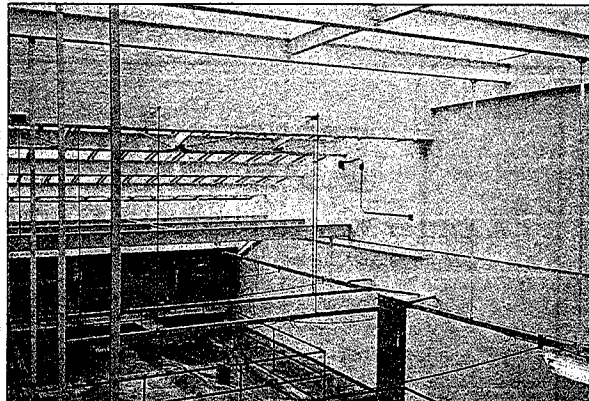
The entire skylight system in the museum's attic is being replaced. The skylights serve as one of the only sources of natural light to the museum and the exhibits below. Once the project began taking shape in 1996, and the skylights were removed and replaced, it quickly became apparent that the surrounding area in the attic was in poor condition.

Dingy, chipping paint on brick walls, and rust on I-beams and metal window frames were now even more obvious with the installation of new, clean skylights. However, the dirt and grime was the least of the gallery's problems — the area was also found to be contaminated with lead-based paint.

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Over 200,000 square feet of walls, ceilings, windows, skylights, and steel support beams for the skylight system in the attic needed to be abated.

The unique style of construction found in the museum's attic would have made it virtually impossible to chemically remove all of the lead-based paint from the intricate architecture. Not to mention, the cost of complete removal would have been astronomical. A more cost-effective and simpler solution had to be found.



Above: Three interior views of the National Gallery of Art illustrate the complexity of the skylight system that needed abatement.

The NGA wanted the safest, fastest, and most economical solution available. Encapsulation was found to be the only practical method of abatement for the museum's requirements.

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The gallery sought the help of Ballard and Associates, Inc., an abatement contractor based in Fairfax, Virginia, who, in turn, recommended Fiberlock Technologies, Inc., the manufacturer of the premier lead-based paint encapsulant L-B-C® Lead Barrier Compound.

Ballard and NGA selected the encapsulant because it meets all ASTM standards, is UL® classified, and has been independently tested and certified by DL Laboratories. L-B-C also needed to be custom matched to meet the strict color requirements of the gallery.

The application of the encapsulant ran smoothly, and Ballard did not experience any problems. It was as easy as repainting. The only areas that needed to be prepped before L-B-C could be applied, were the rusted metal surfaces. Power Rust Stop®, Fiberlock's water-based, rust inhibiting “direct-to-metal” primer was then used.

“We're very happy,” said John Wimmer, a spokesman for Ballard, regarding the performance of Fiberlock's products. □

For more information contact Fiberlock Technologies, Inc., 630 Putnam Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139, (800) 342-3755 or (617) 876-8020; fax (617) 547-6934; web www.fiberlock.com.