

FILE NAME: Painters and Allied Trades (PAINT)

DATE: 1976 Nov

DOC#: PAINT045

**DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Article from Painters and Allied Trades
Journal**

NON-CIRCULATING
MATERIAL

Painters & Allied Trades Journal

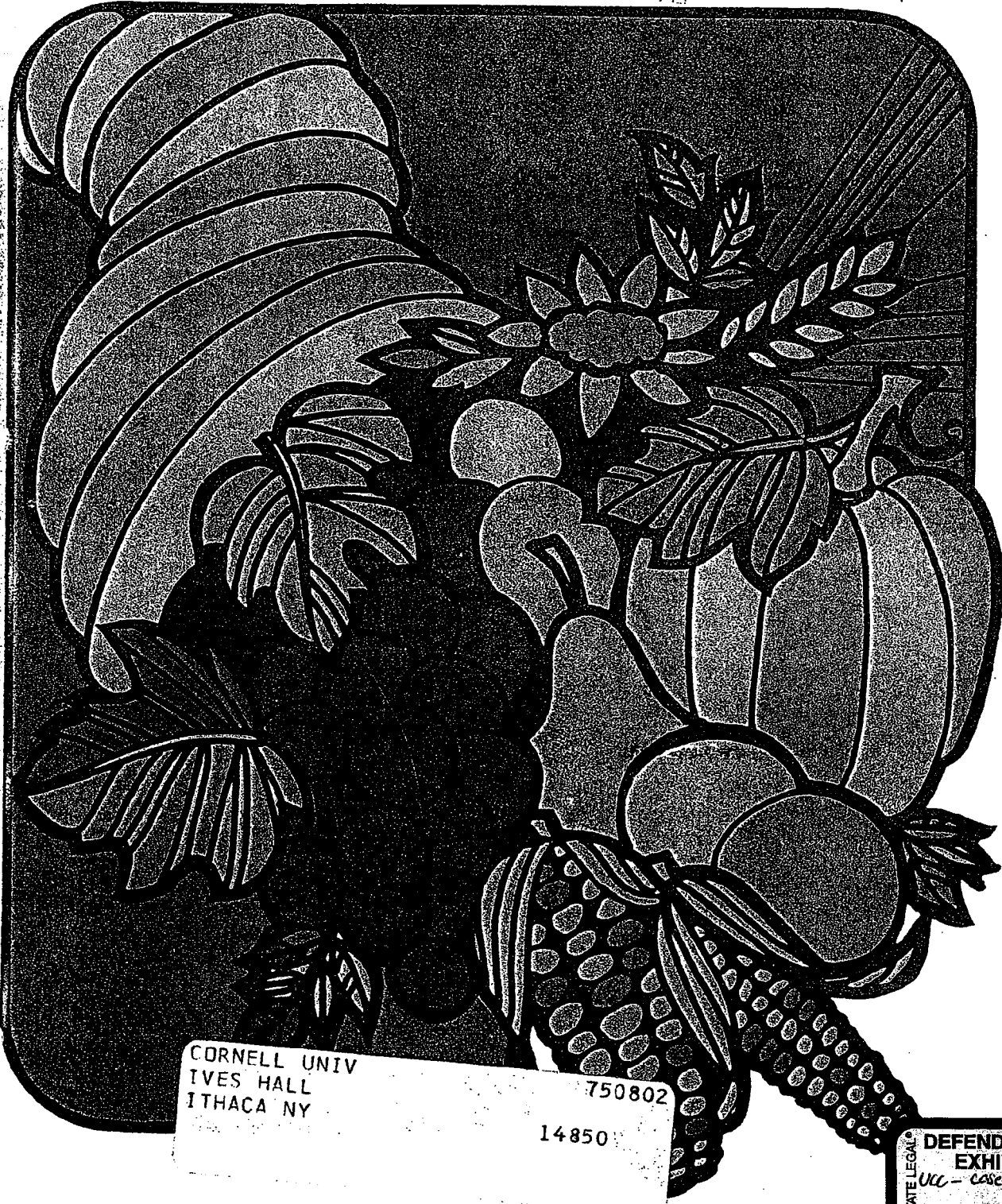
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Painters & Allied Trades Journal

On the Cover

Thanksgiving 1976—despite the struggles, IBPAT members can be thankful of the potential for progress.

NEWS AND FEATURES

page	
Inside Front Cover	From the General President
4	Study Shows 'Significant' Health Hazards
7	GVP Leber on Union Security
9	Joblessness Worse Than Reported
31	The GST Reports

DEPARTMENTS

page	
19	Labor Beat
22	Canadian Labour
24	Sports and Recreation
26	Financial Report

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Robert J. Petersdorf
Publisher
Sam Parker
Editor
1750 New York Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Published monthly by the
International Brotherhood of Painters and
Allied Trades. Second Class mail entry
authorized at Washington, D.C.

POSTMASTERS ATTENTION:
Change of address cards on Form 3579
should be sent to THE PAINTERS AND
ALLIED TRADES JOURNAL, 1750 New
York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Subscription Price \$2.00 per year
Single copy 20 cents

PRINTED ON UNION MADE PAPER
PRINTED WITH UNION MADE INK



VOLUME 90, No. 11

NOVEMBER 1976

The official journal of the International Brotherhood of Painters and Allied Trades, organized March 15, 1887, and the only publication issued under its auspices.



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Study Shows IBPAT Member

Further evidence on the long-term ill effects from prolonged contact with chemicals, dust and other substances dominated the National Joint Safety and Health Committee meeting held recently at IBPAT headquarters in Washington.

Reports to the committee included the long-awaited Mount Sinai School of Medicine investigation of the painting trades, which examined over 1000 members of IBPAT in six cities throughout the United States, and the Dry Color Manufacturers Association (DCMA) study performed by Equitable Environmental Health, Inc., which evaluated 548 workers in three lead chromate plants.

The Mount Sinai final report, 130 pages documenting the acute symptoms of over-exposure found among painters and allied tradesmen, was summarized by Mount Sinai's Dr. Ruth Lilis. The reports key findings:

- 45 percent of the painters in the study exhibited symptoms of upper respiratory and conjunctival irritation. Most common were complaints of irritation to the nose throat and sinuses.

- 38 percent exhibited symptoms of tracheo-bronchial irritation. Most "worrisome" were "symptoms of chronic bronchitis . . . present in individuals who had not smoked cigarettes, thus suggesting the possibility that exposure to fumes and dust may have been at fault."

- 71 percent experienced pre-narcotic symptoms which included "symptoms such as dizziness, light headedness, unusual exhilaration, and loss of balance."

Digestive symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite accompanied the pre-narcotic symptoms in almost one-third of the cases.

- only 46 percent of the non-smoking and 31 percent of the smoking workers given the sputum cytology test for chronic bronchitis and abnormal pulmonary function had normal test results. Abnormality in the sputum cytology test implies a greater likelihood of developing cancer.

Because the Mount Sinai study so clearly demonstrated the existence of significant health hazards in the painting trades, an "urgent, detailed study, with appropriate corrective measures defined and instituted," was recommended. As presented to the committee by Dr. Lilis these included:

- an industrial hygiene assessment of the environmental agents in the painting trade;

- a mortality study of a large cohort of painters;

- an assessment of risk due to mineral dusts such as asbestos and silica;

- a determination of carcinogenicity of chemicals used in the trades;

- a neurotoxicity study of solvents and a behavioral toxicology study of chemicals used in the trades, many of which are responsible for changing normal reaction times and increasing the risks of accident;

- further field examinations of at least 1500 regular painters, an unspecified number of bridge and iron painters, an unspecified number of ship yard painters who use special maritime paints and chemicals, 500 tapers and an unspecified number of epoxy and other special paint workers and,

- finally, the development of a comprehensive medical surveillance program.

Because of the importance of this study to the painters' and allied

The National Joint Safety and Health Committee (NJS&HC) meets regularly to discuss a major concern of our Brotherhood: job safety. The NJS&HC brings the accumulated experience of IBPAT and industry together with specialists in occupational safety and medicine to overcome the problems of safety and health which plague the painters and allied tradesmen.

At each meeting the committee gathers and evaluates essential information to direct the improvement of job conditions and health care for our many Brothers.

The NJS&HC is one more tool in the ongoing effort by IBPAT during "Decade of Job Safety."

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tradesmen's health and safety, an in-depth article will appear in the next issue of the Journal.

The committee also discussed the Dry Color Manufacturers Association study, completed June 25, 1976, which pointed to a two to three times greater risk of respiratory cancer among lead chromate workers.

Since 1940 reports of cancer among chrome pigment workers in Germany, Norway and the United States have led to speculation that lead chromate might be a human carcinogen. Several studies of laboratory animals have indicated chromium pigments induce tumors at the site of implantation or injection. The DCMA study, utilizing an "industrial hygiene survey" and an "historical mortality survey" on 548 workers, adds new strength to the hypothesis.

Dick Murray of the National

Painting and Coatings Association (NPCA) presented the details of the mortality study to the committee.

The historical mortality survey traced 95 percent of the past and present employees of the three plants, finding 53 deaths among the exposed workers. Twenty percent of these deaths were linked to respiratory cancer, *representing a two-to-three-fold increase over the expected respiratory cancer rate in the 1960 male population of the state in which each plant was located.*

The DCMA study conclusion: This apparent excess of respiratory cancer in lead and chromate workers is "consistent with the hypothesis that lead chromate is a respiratory carcinogen."

The study concurs with earlier National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reports

that lead chromate should be regarded as a human carcinogen.

A sobering finding of the DCMA study for cigarette smokers: all workers in the study who died of respiratory cancer, except one, were known to be smokers. According to NJS&HC participant Dr. Heimann of Mount Sinai, this signals the need for both labor and management to alert those workers exposed to respiratory carcinogens that they must not smoke.

Though the DCMA study will assist the NJS&HC in the battle for job safety, the committee pointed out that it is neither conclusive nor inclusive evidence of the hazard of lead chromate and further study will be required.

The study is not conclusive about the hazards of lead chromates because the evaluated workers were also exposed to large levels of zinc chromate. Second, the number of



Shown above during the National Joint Safety and Health Committee meeting are, from the left: Stan Kalin, Department of Labor; Dr. Ruth Lillis, MSSM; Dr. Harry Heimann, MSSM; Frank Burkhardt, Research Director, IBPAT; Robert Petersdorf, General Secretary-Treasurer, IBPAT; S. Frank Raftery, General President; Mark Padow, NPCA; Roy Brown, NPCA; Dick Murray, NPCA; James Destenphano, PPG Industries; William Duval, IBPAT GVP; Jerry Wycoff, IAWCC; Jerry Jones, SSA; Lou Sline, SSA; Paul Knobloch, PDCA; Glen Craven, PDCA; William Belforte, PDCA; L. M. Raftery, IBPAT General President Emeritus.

Members Face 'Significant' Health Hazards (cont'd.)

deaths, 53, was too small for highly accurate statistical analysis. Finally, the use of *state* mortality rates where *community* mortality rates would be more reliable reduces the study's conclusiveness.

The study also is not conclusive because the DCMA dealt only with the health hazards of those workers exposed to lead chromates in production and not with those workers who apply the products.

Dr. Heimann commented that he is just as suspicious of spraying lead chromate as he is of manufacturing and packaging with regard to worker exposure.

The NPCA, well aware of the limitations of the DCMA study, has engaged the services of another researcher to further study the lead chromate problem.

Following the DCMA summary, proposed NIOSH recommendations and OSHA non-mandatory guidelines on worker exposure to free silica sand were discussed by the committee.

Once again, the extreme hazard to workers was demonstrated to the committee by numerous studies documenting, among other harms, the prevalence of silicosis among sandblasters.

NIOSH recommends that the permissible exposure limit for silica be lowered to .05 milligrams in each cubic meter of air over a full shift sampling of a 10-hour day and 40-hour week. To appreciate this standard, imagine a room 227 feet by 150 feet by 120 feet with a 10-hour average of one-ounce of air-borne silica in it at any one time. Of course, the concentration of silica could be 10 ounces for one hour and nothing for 9 hours, so long as the average over the 10-hour day was not exceeded. OSHA is con-

sidering adopting this NIOSH standard until a more complete standard can be developed.

In the meantime, OSHA has developed non-mandatory guidelines for industry to protect employees against disease resulting from silica exposure.

These recommendations involve preventative steps of good housekeeping, personal hygiene, medical surveillance, monitoring and measuring of exposure levels, employee training, respiratory information and improved abrasive blasting practices.

Lou Sline, Silica Safety Association representative to the PDCA

'Workers exposed to respiratory carcinogens . . . must not smoke'

indicated that industry would be willing to comply with the OSHA recommendations. Sline has also proposed a pilot study on the health of sandblasters which would be sponsored by the SSA. The study would be limited to one plant or location and would provide complete monitoring of work conditions as well as medical monitoring of the workers.

Another aspect of the sandblaster safety problem was brought to the attention of the committee by the NPCA, who cited several examples of unsatisfactory responsiveness to worker needs by respirator equipment manufacturers.

The committee agreed with the NPCA and plans are now being made to meet with the principal respirator manufacturers to determine how much they will do—will-

ingly—to make their products more relevant to the health and safety of the workers who use them.

A note of good news for the NJS&HC was interjected into the meeting by Stanley Kalin the OSHA deputy to Dr. Earl Heath, from the Department of Labor.

Since October of 1975 IBPAT has been urging the U.S. Department of Labor to undertake a massive education and training program in the painting industry.

A few months ago, the original IBPAT proposal was expanded to include both labor and management in the proposed training program.

Subsequent meetings between Dr. Morton Corn, assistant secretary for OSHA; Robert Petersdorf, chairman of the NJS&HC and Frank Burkhardt, secretary of the NJS&HC have finally enlisted OSHA support for the proposal.

The OSHA spokesman said that though OSHA's top priority is for "internal training" the IBPAT had made such a strong case for the need of an education and training program in the paint industry that OSHA would agree to go ahead with step one of the proposal, curriculum development.

New York Area Notice

The third annual Stop Arthritis Telethon, originally scheduled for broadcast in the New York area on November 27 and 28 has been rescheduled for airing on March 19 and 20. Future issues of the Journal will carry more information on the IBPAT-backed event.

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