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SEGMENT ON LEAD POISONING

GARRICK UTLEY: Last year some of the animals in New York's Staten Island Zoo were poisoned. A few died. Others, including this black leopard, became paralyzed. The poisoning was a mystery. The zoo asked doctors at New York Medical College to solve it. Whatever the poison was, it came from the environment, and it was strong enough to do permanent damage to the black leopard's nervous system. Blood tests showed that the poison was lead.

DOCTOR: The blood levels of the great cats were very high in lead content, in the toxic range.

UTLEY: This news was so startling that the doctors expanded their study to other animals living in outdoor cages in other city zoos.

DOCTOR: We found also at the Bronx Zoo that the great cats, eleven out of fourteen as I remember, were very high in terms of their blood lead.

MAN: According to Dr. Chow, who we've sent samples to, the levels are so high he didn't believe the animals were alive.

DOCTOR: The same is true of very limited work that we did at the Central Park Zoo. There's one monkey that came in here with a lung condition, but upon autopsy after the animal died, we found that animal had very high lead levels in the vital organs.

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EMIL DOLENSKI: Recently we thought it was related to lead in paint, and we did have analyses done on paint, and we found that some of the paints were indeed higher than acceptable levels for New York City. We are more concerned, though, in the case of animals like the lions, which we have here, because there is no contact at all with paint materials. Yet they're

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still running at levels which would indicate a chronic toxicity problem.

DR. RALPH STEINER: We have reason to believe that it certainly comes from the environment, from the air. Because otherwise the soil around the zoo would not be accumulating as much lead as they presently have. The normal amount of lead in the earth's crust is only about ten to fifteen parts per million. And when you consider that the soil at the Central Park Zoo had over five hundred parts per million, that answers your question.

UTLEY: The lead poisoning the zoo animals comes from leaded gasoline. Automobiles put two hundred thousand tons of toxic lead into our urban environment every year. It's too much for the animals to take.

DOLENSKI: I don't see where we can honestly continue to show large cats outdoors any more. As far as any new enclosures that we make, I think we're going to have to build indoor enclosures with filtered air systems.

DR. DENNIS CRISTEN: These are dangerous conditions, not only for the animals who are living in the confinement of the zoo, but for the people who are also living in the close neighborhood or who come there just as visitors.

MAN: It seems that all young living things are most susceptible to lead. And that babies being born today have high lead levels. And this is an ominous sign, because they're starting out with a high lead level. And we know that lead accumulates over a lifetime, and therefore by the time they reach an adult age they may very well be in trouble.

WILLIAM F. RYAN: Four hundred thousand children in this country are afflicted with lead poisoning. That is a tremendous number of children. That's a serious problem. There are more cases of lead poisoning among children today than there were cases of polio in this country before the Salk vaccine.

SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY: There are scores, I believe it's even in the hundreds of children that are dying of lead poisoning, but haven't been diagnosed as such. So it's widespread in the urban centers, in the older centers of our country. And we know very well that something can be done to prevent it.

UTLEY: The air inner city children breathe is heavily contaminated with lead. But the major source of lead poisoning in the slums is peeling paint from dilapidated buildings. When these buildings were constructed, it was common to use lead based paints on inside walls. Now that paint is flaking off.

Children like to eat the paint chips. The result is illness, brain damage, and even death.

WOMAN: The baby, he had it bad enough where he had to go in the hospital this year for it. Every time I look around there's one getting lead poisoning. And I'm afraid that one time one of them might get it, and it might be a little bit too late.

UTLEY: Norman Britt suffered severe brain damage eight years ago from lead paint. He will never be normal.

MR. BRITT: And Norman was eating it. And all of a sudden, you know, he got kind of sick. So the doctor said he had lead poisoning. He like this the rest of his life; he'll never, you know, never grow out of it.

JACK NEWFIELD: What is most frustrating about this is that a few months ago I spoke to the lead poisoning clinic at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, to parents whose children had been lead poisoned. When I was there I looked at the admissions record for Kings County Hospital. There had been thirty admissions for lead poisoning in one month; and of the thirty, fifteen were re poisonings, which is a guarantee of permanent brain damage.

DR. MICHAEL KLEIN: You don't replace brain cells. Once a brain cell has been destroyed, has swollen, and burst, and been destroyed it is never replaced again.

MR. BRITT: He told me he had lead poisoning. I hadn't ever heard of lead poisoning, so I didn't know what it was, until, you know, he started having these seizures.

UTLEY: What are these seizures like?

BRITT: Well, some kind of change. Like one time he had, like, he'd just go round and round. And the next he changed like he wanted to climb the wall. When something was close to him, he'd grab. And, boy, I had a time trying to pry him loose from it.

UTLEY: This is where Norman Britt was poisoned, the slums of Rochester, New York. But Rochester did something about it. A neighborhood group called SPAN, and the University of Rochester Medical School joined forces to find out how bad the lead problem is. The first thing they did was test slum houses for lead paint.

Two SPAN workers showed me how they did the survey. They

also told me that part of the problem is that young children like the taste of lead paint.

MAN: It tastes very sweet. And that's the trouble, the kids under six, after they taste it, they keep up, and keep eating, and that's it, they get poisoned.

UTLEY: How many houses do you try to see a day?

WOMAN: About ten to fifteen houses.

UTLEY: Now in this house there has been lead poisoning, is that correct?

WOMAN: Yes, the Walters' child got lead poisoning in this house, right upstairs.

UTLEY: How long ago did that happen?

WOMAN: Well, they just found out about it a few weeks ago.

UTLEY: How serious was the lead poisoning in a house like this? How strong was the lead content?

WOMAN: The lead content was strong enough to kill.

UTLEY: The SPAN people took paint samples from places young children could reach. Then we tried a simple chemical test. Now this is some of the paint from inside this house.

WOMAN: Yes.

UTLEY: And you give it the test...

WOMAN: Pour a little bit of the solution on it, if it turns black...

UTLEY: It turned dark. And a child that lived in this house has gotten lead poisoning from this lead content paint.

WOMAN: Right.

MAN: That's correct.

UTLEY: The slum children themselves were tested for lead in their blood. The results were shocking.

DR. BARRY PLESS: Over a third of the children in the random sample in Rochester, which is a good, valid random sample,

are in danger of being lead poisoned, because they do have levels above fifty. There are people who believe that it may be the cause of some of the specific learning disabilities that we're now seeing. There are people who believe that it may be related to behavioral problems. There are many people who believe that the very high proportion of children who are retarded, who we never have a reason or diagnosis to explain their retardation, may in fact be attributable to lead poisoning.

UTLEY: Slum children can eat lead paint and show no outward signs of damage. Scientists disagree over how much lead it takes to hurt a child. Some feel it takes very little.

NAOMI CHAMBERLAIN: The fact that we cannot prove that low levels of lead are dangerous does not mean that it isn't true. We can also not prove that it is not dangerous. And just as for years and years and years, nobody has really cared that children were being maimed, retarded and crippled, and dying, or maybe behavior problems, or reading problems - and it happens to people who can least afford to have it happen. Predominately the kind we're talking about happens to poor kids, who already have two thousand strikes against them.

And so you say that because I cannot prove, then let us wait, and objectively let somebody else's child become a statistic. That infuriates me. It's the worst kind of mass mutilation.

UTLEY: No one knows how many children over the years have been poisoned by lead, have been crippled mentally for life. Because those children are mostly poor, black, and ignored. But now even white middle class kids are suffering from lead poisoning, and we know what it can do.

And even though we know what it can do, lead is still present in dangerous amounts in too much of the paint we use in our homes, and in too much of the ceramic dishware we eat from. We'll look at those two areas in a moment.

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UTLEY: Paint which is applied to interiors where children can get at it is not supposed to contain more than one percent lead. But there is a good deal of paint on the market available today in this country, which has more than that one percent lead content. It's been discovered here at the New York City Health Department Laboratory. And the man in charge of the program is Dr. Vincent Guinee, the head of the Bureau of Lead Poison Control.

Dr. Guinee, what put you on to this problem?

DR. VINCENT GUINEE: The sanitarians from the Health Department have been checking paints for interior use periodically. And over the last several months we found that rather large numbers of paints labelled as for use in interior surface, and therefore presumably without much lead, were turning up. And in some of our surveys we found that from ten to twenty percent of cans labelled "for interior use," and sometimes even labelled "for use on children's toys, and playpens, and children's rooms" were found to have lead contents five, ten percent.

The paint companies have been working under a voluntary standard since 1955. They, of course, have supposedly been operating under our current health code, which was in 1959. But many of the paint companies have slipped up, especially in certain colors of oranges, yellows and greens.

UTLEY: What is the consumer going to do now?

GUINEE: A doctor friend of mine asked me this question about two weeks ago. He said, "Look, I've seen the press releases about the fact that paint can have lead in it, although the label doesn't say anything about it. I want to paint my child's room, I'd like to use bright colors. Which paint should I use?"

And I had to say frankly I could not guarantee any particular brand or color of paint. The only thing I could say was that, if you take colors that are not red, or yellow, orange or green, you take the most recently made can of paint from the biggest company in the country, it's less likely that you'll have lead in it. But there's no guarantees on any can of paint right now.

UTLEY: The paint industry says it stopped using lead in paints for inside use thirty years ago. Here is the way a spokesman for the major paint makers put it, in testimony before a Congressional committee.

"There is no longer any purpose in using white lead pigments in paints intended for interior use, since better white lead-free pigments for this purpose now are available at lower cost." The industry told Congress that it voluntarily stopped making leaded paints for household use. Modern interior paint is not a major cause of lead poisoning in properly maintained homes, according to the industry.

Writer Jack Newfield and Congressman Ryan, who have been crusading against leaded paints for years, have petitioned the

FDA - the Food and Drug Administration - to outlaw lead in household paints. To outlaw it, simply and totally. So far, though, the FDA's approach has been to require only warning labels on paint with more than a small trace of lead.

But labels on cans aren't of any help years later, when the paint starts to flake on the walls. We used to think that lead poisoning was exclusively a ghetto problem, something that middle class people just didn't have to worry about. After all, how many of us have paint flaking on our walls.

But now we're discovering there are a lot of other ways to get lead poisoning. Pencils, the kind children chew on when doing schoolwork, often were painted with leaded paint. Now the pencil makers say they've stopped making them that way. But a lot of these old pencils are still around.

And just this week the FDA told people across this country to get rid of two hundred thousand ceramic bowls given away in a soup company promotion. It turns out the glaze on the bowls contains dangerous amounts of lead.

This is Mrs. David Augustine and her son Philip, who live in a comfortable suburb near Rochester. They found out about lead poisoning the hard way.

MRS. DAVID AUGUSTINE: About two years ago Philip began to show symptoms of vomiting, he began falling down for no apparent reason, he could not stand to be at any height without saying he was going to fall down, "Hold on to me." And over a period of time stopped eating everything. He had had brain tests scheduled, and the pediatrician told me that they were looking for the possibility of a brain tumor. And, of course, I rather lost control at that time.

They took some more blood tests, and when the report came back it was stated that there was a large amount of lead in his blood.

DR. JAMES SAYRE: We tested his toys, we tested the paint, we looked what we thought were conventional sources. It turned out that Philip had been drinking his orange juice every day from a ceramic lined vessel, made in a local ceramic class, which had, by actual test, a very significantly high lead release. And he had actually been drinking his lead with his orange juice, practically every day, for a period of about three months.

MRS. AUGUSTINE: I'm just thankful, thank God, that everything worked out, because it could have been much worse. We're supposed to be intelligent people, and yet here was a case of

something that I had never been close to, I had never known anything about lead poisoning. So consequently I didn't have any idea what the symptoms were.

UTLEY: A Canadian child who drank from this pitcher was not as lucky as Philip. He died from lead poisoning. Hand crafted ceramic ware often is dangerously high in lead. But even some mass produced pieces can be potentially dangerous.

It is possible to test ceramics for lead. In Rochester the county health department tests dishes for local citizens. And we bought some pieces in New York gift shops to be tested there. Most of them were Mexican imports, which often have a very high lead content.

They should be safe to eat and drink out of, shouldn't they?

DR. MARGARET RATEBURN: Well, if the glaze isn't fired sufficiently high, at a sufficiently high temperature, they may very well leak lead when acid is added. And that's what we're doing here.

UTLEY: In other words, if it hasn't been baked hot enough.

RATEBURN: Right.

UTLEY: Are most of these problems with American produced ceramic ware, or that which is imported?

RATEBURN: Well, there's problems with both, actually. We have in our own testing here, most of the problem has been from the imported. But we do have a positive piece made right here in Rochester; we have another positive from California; and one from Maine.

UTLEY: Mr. Gordon, what kind of a test are you running, what are you looking for?

GORDON: This is essentially a presumptive test for lead. It is one which was devised and developed by the FDA. If lead is present in this solution, we get an immediate transformation of color to red. If it is negative, it retains somewhat of its green color and nature.

UTLEY: Let's run the experiment now on one of these - say this one, for example.

GORDON: All right, we have already added acidic acid to this particular sample here. Now we take a few cc's of the

acidic acid. Presumably it leaks the lead out. Next we add the dithyozone solution, which you notice is green in color. Then we shake it, and immediately get a cherry red color, which indicates that lead is present in this piece of ware.

UTLEY: Can you tell how much lead is present? Does that mean it's at a danger level, if it turns red?

GORDON: Yes, the dithyozone solution is so standardized that it gives the lower limits that are recommended by the FDA.

UTLEY: Is it possibly to tell which type of ceramic ware is likely to have a high lead content?

RATHBURN: No.

UTLEY: There's no way a person at home can judge it.

RATHBURN: No. The only way you can judge it is to test it.

UTLEY: We just ran a test on this, Mr. Gordon, and how did it turn out?

GORDON: This is a negative test, on this piece of pottery here.

UTLEY: Now we're going to test on this mug. This is the kind of a mug, or a jug, from which you would drink orange juice, or soft drinks.

RATHBURN: Coffee or tea.

UTLEY: Coffee or tea. I have one in my own house. Let's see how it turns out. What does that mean?

GORDON: Now this is a borderline case.

UTLEY: It's neither red, nor...

GORDON: It's neither red, nor is it green. But this is one which we consider a borderline.

UTLEY: Is there any regulation in this country which oversees and controls the minimum standards of glazing for ceramic ware and pottery?

RATHBURN: The FDA has guidelines. However, there are at present no actual laws. Canada has recently passed a statute regulating up to seven parts per million, bleaching out lead.

UTLEY: And it has to pass this test.

WOMAN: Yeah.

UTLEY: But we don't have that in this country.

WOMAN: We don't have it yet in this country.

UTLEY: That's another sort of bowl...

GORDON: No, I would consider this one to be negative.

UTLEY: This is the kind of bowl you'd use for everything from storing vegetables, or fruit, orange juice...

RATHBURN: Salads.

UTLEY: Salads. Again, this is an imported bowl, the kind many tourists bring back from Mexico. But I imagine a similar type of ceramic ware is also hand-crafted in many parts of the United States. That has turned out right away.

GORDON: That's definitely positive.

UTLEY: It's definitely positive with a lead content.

GORDON: With a high lead content, extremely high lead content.

UTLEY: These pieces of dishware, which we picked up in a gift store in New York, the results are that this one is okay. These two are borderline. Wouldn't want to be too sure that what you're drinking or eating of them wouldn't harm you. And these three are all positive, they all contain lead, and they can poison you if you drink or eat too much out of it which has been kept too long in it, if what it was was acidic.

There are the kinds of things which we all have at home. I know I do, and perhaps many people watching this program do, too. So, doctor, what does it mean in practical terms for a person at home who uses this for storing food? Is it a danger?

RATHBURN: Yes, don't!

UTLEY: Don't. The problem with lead simply is that it's so useful for industry for so many products: as an additive to paint to make colors brighter, to glaze to make pottery ware shine. And to gasoline to raise the octane level cheaply.

Lead becomes a danger in paint only when it chips and a child eats it, and in pottery which has not been glazed hot enough. But gasoline? Gasoline is something different. Because lead is put into gasoline deliberately, with the full knowledge it'll run through the internal combustion engine, out the exhaust pipe, and into the air you and I breathe. We'll look at that in a moment.

UTLEY: Lead gets into the air from leaded gasoline burned by cars and trucks. Since Southern California has so many cars, it also has the nation's worst lead problem. The amount of lead in the air in Los Angeles is increasing by seven percent a year. San Diego is almost as bad.

Even more alarming, one study showed a sharp rise in the amount of lead in the blood of San Diego housewives.

Air pollution authorities in California have concentrated mostly on other forms of contamination from automobiles. You can't see lead in the air, and it doesn't make your eyes water.

KENNEDY: Lead poisoning can be found in the air, and has just as severe effects in terms of life in those areas where there is a heavy concentration. This is something which I've been unaware of until relatively recently. And it again shows what has to be done.

HEALTH OFFICIAL: Lead as an agent in the air is absorbed and retained in the tissues of the population here to a much larger extent than elsewhere, because the levels of lead are higher here. And there is a biochemical effect, even though it may not make people sick. But there is a measured alteration in body chemistry, which we think is undesirable.

UTLEY: There is so much lead spewing into the California air that it is even affecting the Pacific Ocean. Scientists at the Scripps Oceanographic Institute at La Jolla discovered that their precise analyses of the chemistry of sea water were changed by lead settling into the ocean.

That caused Dr. T. J. Chow of Scripps to start measuring lead throughout the environment. He's still doing it. And his work is often cited by those who want to ban leaded gasoline. Dr. Chow discovered there is even lead in rain water, bringing it very close to the federal danger level for lead content in drinking water.

He has been measuring the lead content of the air around San Diego for five years. The levels are often dangerously above California state standards.

Dr. Chow says airborne lead is the most dangerous of all. Half of the lead you breathe is absorbed by the lungs. The body has better defenses against lead contamination coming from food and drink.

These filters show there is less lead in the air where there are not many automobiles. The worst areas are downtown districts and suburban areas near freeways. The dust from these two places contains as much lead as the ore from a lead mine.

DR. CLARE PATTERSON: I am convinced - I wouldn't be here if I weren't - that really millions of youngsters each year are being, their minds and their nervous systems are being irretrievably damaged, forever, for their whole lives, by the lead that they're breathing.

UTLEY: Dr. Clare Patterson of Cal Tech traveled to the Arctic and Antarctic ice caps to prove how much the worldwide levels of lead have gone up. A thousand years of snow have been preserved here. Dr. Patterson said the increase in lead since 1940 has been enormous, and he thinks it's essential to ban leaded gasoline at once.

PATTERSON: The most significant source of lead, of course, is from leaded gasoline. It contributes about ninety-nine percent of the lead in the air. And I might say that the lead in cities like New York, or Los Angeles, or Washington, D.C., any city, large city, the lead in that air is about ten thousand times above natural levels.

NEWFIELD: Congressman Ryan and Senator Kennedy introduced legislation; after hearings, after struggle, after lobbying the legislation was finally passed. Thirty million dollars to prevent and treat lead poisoning was finally authorized by Congress. And then the Nixon Administration wouldn't spend the money, even though Congress authorized it.

KENNEDY: One of the most overworked words, of course, of our time is changing priorities. But this is where they ought to be changed. Here you can actually have a direct impact in stopping retardation, for example, and also in saving children's lives. And ultimately saving the taxpayers from paying for institutionalizing children and others that are affected by it.

NEWFIELD: There are certain problems in this culture which me, and most, don't know the answer to. I don't know what you do about heroin; I don't know how you get garbage out of the slums; I don't know what the policy should be for the Middle East.

Lead poisoning is one of the few problems in this culture which is man-made, and we know what causes it, we know what the remedy is, and we just won't do it.

PATTERSON: We're so close to classical lead poisoning that I, and other people like me, believe that we're being affected right now by the lead that we're already absorbing. We're more irritable, we're less rational. It's affecting our central nervous system.

^{Henry Schube}
DR. HEINRICH SCHUBERT: We are attempting to reproduce in the laboratory the experiments that man has unwittingly performed on himself since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, which was when he began to dig up metals from the earth and spread them around through his environment.

What happens is that the rats have a high mortality rate when they're young. You get a shortened longevity. And the older animals look -- they just sort of loll around without any energy. They have runts, dead litters, and dead offspring, and they don't breed, they fail to breed. And the mothers eat the young. There are all kinds of things that happen.

I think that this is certainly a warning. And if we don't pay attention to it, we're stupid.

UTLEY: We have had many warnings about the danger of lead in the atmosphere. A main source of it is lead-based gasoline. What are we going to do about it? And what is the government going to do about it? A man who can answer this question is William Ruckelshaus, the head of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mr. Ruckelshaus, how long have you been conducting studies on this problem?

WILLIAM RUCKELSHAUS: Well, we've been conducting studies -- not our agency, but the agencies that we inherited from the National Air Pollution Control Administration -- for years on the impact of lead, not only in the atmosphere, but also from lead-based paint, and lead that you generally ingest in foods, for many years. We still have huge gaps in our knowledge, as to the precise health impact, at what level, of the ingestion of lead, and where the total body burden of lead comes from.

UTLEY: But in terms of gasoline, you are at least satisfied that there is enough of a health problem to go ahead with this program.

BUCKLEHAUS: Yes, we are. Our information shows that the health effects of lead in the atmosphere, above certain levels, can be serious. There is considerable dispute over just what the impact on health is of lead in the atmosphere. But we believe there is sufficient evidence of a deleterious impact on human health of lead above certain levels in the atmosphere, that it ought to be regulated.

And the way we think it can be regulated best is through regulating its existence in gasoline, and thereby reducing it from the emissions from the automobile.

UTLEY: What is the status of the program now? It starts in your agency, where you draw guidelines, or concrete proposals?

BUCKLEHAUS: We will issue regulations which will regulate the additives that are put in fuel, under Section 211 of the Clean Air Act. We have two authorities to regulate additives in gasoline, not only lead, but any other kind of additive.

One is, if that additive creates a health hazard, we can regulate it. And in this case we think it does. Or if the additive, the regulation of the additive is necessary in order for the automotive companies to meet the 1975 standards. And both of these apply under Section 211, and it's under this authority that we will issue regulations, generally regulating it in the fuel itself.

UTLEY: Does this mean that you are in favor of limiting lead-based gasoline, or of banning it, as of a certain date?

BUCKLEHAUS: Well, our regulations have not as yet been issued. But the approach that we're taking is to have at least one class, or one brand of gasoline generally available by 1975, and gradually phase out the use of lead as an additive in gasoline.

The pace at which it's phased out depends very greatly on how we view the impact, not only on health, but on the petroleum industry, and how best this phasing process can work, so as to cause the least amount of economic dislocation to the country.

UTLEY: You say it means that by 1975 there will be a guaranteed lead free gasoline on the market available to everyone.

By what date would you like to see all lead-based gasoline removed from the market?

RUCKLEHAUS: Well, this is one of the things we're still considering, at what pace we will phase lead out of gasoline completely. And there are arguments, and valid arguments that can be made for one phasing process or another. And, really, before the regulation finally comes out, it's too early for me to say exactly what form it will take.

It will be probably very shortly after 1975 that the lead as an additive is phased out completely of gasoline.

UTLEY: Many problems in the environment field are finally acted on by government after a great deal of public opinion has been mobilized and articulated. Is that the case here? Or in the case of lead in gasoline, is it more due to scientific research?

RUCKLEHOUSE: If the public says that we want clean air, and we want pure water, the government will respond to that legitimate public demand by providing clean air and clean water. But as to how they go about it, and what specific substances are taken out of the air so as to cleanse, or out of the water so as to make it pure, it should be left up to scientific determination.

Because there's no reason to respond to public pressure to remove a certain substance from the air or the water, if there is no public benefit to be gained thereby. And our decision to remove lead, or to phase it out of use as a gasoline additive is based on what we conceive to be in the public interest, the protection of the public health, and the insurance that these standards can be met by 1975.

UTLEY: Do you see any organized strong, or meaningful opposition to the removal of lead from gasoline, either in industry, or from other sectors? Or is everybody for clean gasoline?

RUCKLEHAUS: No, everybody's for clean gasoline, just as everybody's for clean water and clean air. But there are different degrees of fervor as to how strongly they believe that we ought to have clean air or clean water.

UTLEY: Mr. Rucklehaus plans to abolish leaded gasoline shortly after 1975. Actually there is unleaded gasoline available today, but not many people are buying it. The petroleum industry began adding lead to gasoline in the 1920's. It was a cheap and easy way to increase octane levels, and lead has been added to most gasolines ever since.

Everyone knew this lead was poisonous, and that the lead in gasoline eventually was released into the air. But there didn't seem to be that many automobiles. And, after all, there was an awful lot of air.

Tonight we have seen and heard a lot about lead, what it can do to all of us, and what it already is tragically doing to some of our children. Lead is a new field of dispute involving the environment and public health. There are experts on both sides of the argument, some maximizing the danger, others minimizing it. → work about the other side.

Minutely there's not as much scientific knowledge about lead as there should be. There are many areas where research is only getting underway. Most important is the study of lead in the food that we eat.

Lead is a problem we could easily ignore. It doesn't have high visibility. It is not the first problem our modern industrial society has dumped on us, and it won't be the last. It may not even be the most serious. But it is there. And the evidence shows that lead is a clear and present danger.