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August 27, 1971

Dr. J. F. Cole
International Lead Zinc
Research Organization Inc.
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New York, New York 10017

Dear Jerry:

Attached is clipping from a Pittsburgh newspaper. According to the newspaper report the Health Board has taken a stand that possible lead poisoning is indicated by a lead level lower than 80 micrograms.

Will you please investigate this action to determine exactly what the Health Board's regulations are, and if correctly reported, on what basis do they make the statement about the low level of lead being indicative of poisoning?

Yours very truly,

(sgd.) W. L. Mann

Manager
Environmental Health Dept.

Enclosure
WLM:cd

bec:
Messrs. L. H. Herthneck
R. W. Merritt ✓
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J. T. Rich

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Lead poisoning reportable disease

Secretary of Health Dr. J. Finton Speller, announced this week that lead poisoning is now a reportable disease in Pennsylvania, following action taken by the Advisory Health Board at its July meeting.

The board made the disease reportable by defining what constitutes the presence of lead poisoning and possible lead poisoning, and by amending the regulations governing communicable and noncommunicable diseases to include them.

According to the new amendment, lead poisoning is evidenced by a blood lead level of 80 micrograms (.08 per cent) or higher and must be reported to the local health authorities. Possible Lead Poisoning is indicated by a blood lead level of 40 to 79 micrograms (.04 per cent to .079 per cent) and must also be reported.

Dr. Speller said the Surgeon General, United States Public Health Service, has recommended lead poisoning be made a reportable disease, and said that the classifications adopted in Pennsylvania follow the Surgeon General's suggested standards.

Lead poisoning is an environmental disease found in old, poorly maintained houses. Children, usually between the ages of 1 and 6, contract it by eating the pleasant-tasting chips of peeling tenement walls, painted a generation ago with leaded paint.

Nationally, an estimated 400,000 children suffer lead-paint poisoning each year. Some 200 children die. Many others are left with permanent brain damage and retardation.