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ESSENTIALS OF INDUSTRIAL HEALTH

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63 Illustrations



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Preface

Industry is the bulwark of our nation, whether in war or at peace. Under all conditions the employer desires to proceed at peak production and the employee to continue to draw maximum wages. These desires converge, and at their convergence stands industrial health, through which they may be rationally accomplished. No industry can proceed at full speed unless its individual human units have a fair degree of the personal (physical and mental) health so vital to the quantity, quality, and continuity of production. One skilled worker absent because of preventable illness can greatly disturb the smooth functioning of the production line and cause losses out of all proportion to expectation, because of the disruption of teamwork.

The efforts of those who have long been identified with the conservation of the health of the working population must now be redoubled; industrialists and physicians who have heretofore given little thought to the subject of industrial health will be called upon to contribute their share in the responsibility for keeping the employed physically and mentally fit, and adequately protecting the manpower behind our industrial mobilization.

The health of the industrial worker has always been an important bulwark of production in peacetime, but in the prosecution of mechanized warfare it becomes the proving-ground for the success of the combatant forces. The war can and will be won on industrial assembly lines. An excerpt from a recent editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (February 21, 1942) is significant in this respect: "Under the pressure of events neither employers nor physicians yet fully comprehend how vast a contribution could be made to the war efforts by well-organized industrial-health programs. A reduction of 10 per cent in the 400,000,000 man-days now lost annually from illness and injury in industry represents the time required to build five capital ships, 16,000 tanks, or 9,000 bombers."

Medical schools, realizing the necessity of presenting the fundamentals in this rapidly growing field, are now placing more emphasis on the fundamentals of industrial health in undergraduate and graduate courses. This book closely follows a recently proposed course for undergraduates.

I have attempted to show that industrial health goes beyond the ordinary practice of curative medicine and surgery in industry,

B. PERSONAL SERVICE CONVENIENCES

Personal service conveniences besides toilet and washroom facilities are important to know, so that proper industrial environment may be provided for employees. The following recommendations have also been made through the Public Health Service[53]:

1. In workshops, factories, or other places of employment where it is necessary for male employees to change their clothing or where females are employed, adequate separate dressing rooms with lockers for males and females should be provided.



Fig. 50. Washing and locker facilities in modern industrial establishment. (Courtesy of Bradley Washfountain Co.)

2. All personal service rooms should be, so far as possible, screened and otherwise protected so as to prevent the entrance or harboring of rats, insects, or vermin of any kind in such quarters, and they should be maintained in a sanitary condition.

3. Dressing rooms should be provided for men whenever the type of work performed involves exposure to excessive dust, dirt, heat, fumes, vapor or moisture of such degree as is declared by the enforcing authority to require the same.

4. Two-compartment lockers should be provided in a separate room from the place of work for employees whose clothes are exposed to con-

tamination with poisonous, infectious, or irritating material, and well-separated facilities should be provided for street and working clothes.

5. Where the process in which the worker is engaged is such that his working clothes may become wet or have to be washed between shifts, they should be so cared for that dry clothes are assured for the return to work.

6. Adequate provision for drying outdoor clothing, if wet, should be made.

7. Where less than 10 women are employed and a retiring room is not furnished, some equivalent space should be provided which can be screened properly and made suitable for the use of women employees.

8. The minimum space provided for a retiring room for 10 women should be 60 square feet. The minimum increased space for more should be at least 2 square feet for each additional woman employed.

9. At least one couch or bed should be provided in every place where more than 10 women are employed. The number of such beds or couches required should be as follows: 10 to 100 women, 1 bed; 100 to 250 women, 2 beds; and 1 additional bed for each additional 250 women employed.

10. The walls and partitions of every retiring room should be of solid construction and should be at least 7 feet high. Glass of approved translucence may be inserted in such walls or partitions. Every retiring room should be so constructed and maintained that privacy may be secured at all times and should be provided with locker or separate clothes hook for every female employee, unless such facilities are provided elsewhere.

11. In every establishment a separate lunch room should be maintained unless it is convenient for the employees to lunch away from the premises. Table 51 gives the number of square feet per person, based on the maximum number of persons using the room at one time, which should be required.

TABLE 51

Space Allotment Provisions—Lunchrooms

Persons	*Square Feet per Person*
Less than 25	8
25–74	7
75–149	6
150–499	5
500 and more	4

12. All factories, workshops, and other places of employment should allow all employees at least ½ hour for their midday meal, after being continuously employed for a period of not more than 5 hours on any work day, except Saturday.

13. Notice of the hours within which employees may partake of such meals should be plainly printed and kept posted at a conspicuous place in all workrooms where employees are engaged.