



AOMA Report

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Doris Flournoy, Editor

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

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NIOSH ADVISED AGAINST RADIATION HEALTH EFFECTS STUDY OF NUCLEAR SHIPYARD WORKERS

A study of possible radiation health effects of nuclear workers at the Portsmouth, N.H., Naval Shipyard which has been proposed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health could "add little" to the scientific information already collected on the effects of radiation on human chromosomes, according to a committee of the National Research Council. After reviewing the NIOSH research protocol, the committee advised NIOSH not to proceed with the study. The NCR committee review was conducted at the request of Richard Schweiker, Secretary of Health and Human Services, following concerns raised by the Navy that the Portsmouth study designs would not produce useful scientific information. Chromosome and sperm studies were proposed by NIOSH as a follow-up to an earlier NIOSH mortality study that found no excess risk of cancer among these workers.

The committee acknowledged that evaluation of chromosome aberrations is a useful method for verifying radiation exposures measured by film badges or other devices, or for determining the exposure of someone not wearing such a device, but added that it is a more expensive and complex method for routine monitoring of whole populations than the exposure information already recorded by the dosimeters worn by the Portsmouth workers. The committee also noted that normal adults, not exposed to occupational radiation, have some six million blood cells with chromosome aberrations of the type proposed for study at Portsmouth, and stated "The appearance of the few extra aberrant cells in a sample from an exposed individual need not imply that that person will suffer any adverse health consequences." In addition, the committee pointed out that radiation exposure is only one of about 90 different agents, including industrial chemicals, experimental and therapeutic drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana, that have been shown to produce changes in human sperm, and, therefore, no direct tie between sperm effects and health effects can be predicted from the subtle changes that might have been produced by the low radiation exposure of the Portsmouth workers.

WORKSITE HYPERTENSION PROGRAM UNDERWAY AT CHRYSLER CORPORATION PLANT IN MICHIGAN

An intensive worksite program aimed at controlling high blood pressure has begun at the Chrysler Corporation's engine plant in Trenton, Michigan, where voluntary participation of the plant's 2,200 employees is sought in an effort to track down those who are unaware they have high blood pressure and to locate those who have discontinued treatment for hypertension to encourage them to resume treatment. In addition to identifying those with high blood pressure, the program will provide referrals, along with follow-up and patient education. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan, along with local and state health organizations, is assisting in the program. The Michigan Department of Public Health estimates that some 1.8 million persons in Michigan suffer from high blood pressure, with as many as one-third unaware they have it.

UAW PUBLISHES GUIDE TO VISUAL DISPLAY UNITS

A guide to visual display units and their health hazards (both confirmed and unconfirmed) has been published by the United Auto Workers Health and Safety Department. The booklet is available from UAW (8000 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI 48214) for \$2.00 a copy. In the summary, it is concluded that many of the problems reported with VDU operation can be traced to such local factors as office lighting, glare, reflections, poor brightness and

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contrast adjustment, extended viewing time, poor posture, and poor management practices, and adds that the solutions to many of these problems have been known for years, but the knowledge has not been fully used. The following list of recommendations is suggested for local unions to consider for collective bargaining, as applicable:

- * Design features such as the following should be a joint union-management consideration before VDUs are installed: (a) work area layout; (b) office decorations; (c) lighting; (d) ventilation; (e) temperature and humidity; (f) adjustable desks, chairs and foot rests; (g) separate adjustable VDU screens and keyboards; (h) paper copy holders and paperwork; (i) VDU character size and color; (j) equipment noise; (k) brightness and contrast controls; and (l) machine ornaments (shiny surfaces, decals, plates).
- * Periodic/regular inspection and maintenance of VDUs should be carried out following manufacturers' specifications or recommendations.
- * VDUs and associated equipment should be monitored periodically to assure proper operation (levels of radiation, static electricity, control adjustments).
- * Worker training and re-education programs should be available.
- * Duration of break periods away from VDU work should be 15 minutes after an hour, or 30 minutes after two hours of continuous work depending on workload and visual demands.
- * VDU rest-breaks should be taken away from the equipment.
- * VDUs should be switched off when not in use.
- * Joint union-management safety and health committees should be formed.
- * Complaint, grievance and response procedures should be developed.
- * Devices to reduce or eliminate static should be installed.
- * Protection against glare and reflections should be installed.
- * Employer-paid periodic eye examinations, especially eye exams for workers assigned to VDUs for the first time, should be available.
- * Eye test methods used and test results should be provided to the local union and to the individual workers.
- * The cost of new or replacement eyeglasses, or contact lenses, required for VDU work should be paid by the employer.

SIXTY-DAY DEFERRAL GRANTED THREE LEAD INDUSTRIES FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMPLIANCE PLANS

Primary and secondary lead smelting industries and battery manufacturing industries have been given another 60 days in which to comply with certain provisions of the lead standard. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has deferred until November 15, 1982, the date by which the three industries must submit written compliance plans for the establishment and implementation of programs to reduce employee exposures to or below the permissible exposure limit (or the interim level) by means of engineering and work practice controls.

OSHA is currently undertaking a thorough reconsideration of the lead standard which will be directed toward, among other things, improving the cost effectiveness of the standard. In view of this reconsideration, representatives of the three industries asked OSHA to defer the requirement to prepare written compliance programs. Since the plans would require costly engineering plans and studies as well as detailed compliance schedules, OSHA proposed on June 18 to stay the requirement pending reconsideration of the standard and deferred the effective date to August 30 to allow the agency to consider comments on the proposed stay. Due to the number of comments received, OSHA now requires additional time to ensure full consideration of the record prior to making a decision on whether to issue a stay.

OSHA AND NACA AGREE ON JOINT PROJECT TO DISSEMINATE PESTICIDE HEALTH PROTECTION INFORMATION

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the National Agricultural Chemical Association have joined forces to develop a slide/tape program to teach employers and employees how to provide better health protection during the manufacture and formulation of pesticides. The project, which is to be directed especially to small business, was formalized by an agreement signed by Jack D. Early, President of NACA and Thorne G. Auchter, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health.

The slide/tape program, which is to be based on NACA's booklet "Good Workplace Practices for the Manufacture and Formulation of Pesticides," is being funded by the NACA. Script development, however, will be the responsibility of a joint OSHA/NACA task force. Under the agreement, OSHA and NACA must agree on the contents and format of the program before it will be distributed. The slide/tape program will cover recommendations on steps for hazard awareness, employee indoctrination and training, facility and equipment design, operating procedures, housekeeping, hygiene practices and facilities, industrial hygiene, work clothing and personal protective equipment, and medical programs. These topics are also covered in the booklet which is available from The National Agricultural Chemicals Association, 1155 15th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20005.

REVISED ASBESTOS STANDARD NOT LIKELY TO BE PROPOSED BEFORE LATE 1983

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is not likely to issue its proposed revision to the asbestos standard until late in 1983, according to OSHA Director of Health Standards R. Leonard Vance, who spoke at the 12th annual meeting of the Asbestos Information Association/North America held in the Washington, D.C., area September 14-15.

The current standard stands at 2 fibers/cc of air. In 1975 it was proposed to lower the limit to 0.5 fibers/cc, and in 1980 a NIOSH/OSHA panel recommended 0.1 fibers/cc. Vance cited higher priority of other standards as the reason for OSHA's slow progress.

LATEST VERSION OF REGISTRY OF TOXIC EFFECTS OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES NOW AVAILABLE

Availability of the 1980 Registry of Toxic Effects of Chemical Substances (RTECS) has been announced. The 1980 edition is the latest printed version of this publication, formerly known as the Toxic Substances List. The Registry is a compendium of toxicity data extracted from the scientific literature. The 1980 edition contains 45,156 substance entries (including 122,940 synonyms) and their associated toxicity data. This is approximately 5,900 more substances than were in the 1979 Registry. The 1980 edition also includes, for the first time, a complete Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) number index to the RTECS file.

The 1980 Registry lists all substance prime names and synonyms in alphabetical order. Each prime name is identified by a unique RTECS accession number; each synonym is cross-referenced to its prime name accession number. For each such number the following data are provided when available: substance prime name and synonyms; date when substance record was last updated; CAS number; molecular weight and formula; mutation, primary irritation, and toxic dose data; and citations to aquatic toxicity ratings, IARC reviews, existing Federal standards, NIOSH criteria document recommended standards, current Intelligence bulletins and analytical methods, the NTP Carcinogenesis Testing Program, ACGIH Threshold Limit Values, and the EPA Toxic Substances Control Act Inventory. Each data line and citation is referenced to the source from which the information was extracted.

This publication supersedes all previous printed editions of the Registry. It is available only from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The GPO Stock Number is 017-033-00399-8 and the domestic price is \$27.00.

OSHA CALLS MEETING OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH EXPERTS TO IMPROVE INSPECTION TARGETING

Approximately 60 occupational safety and health specialists have been invited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to attend a conference in Washington, D.C., in October to improve health inspection targeting. The list of those invited includes occupational safety and health authorities and representatives of management, labor and the public sector. Among occupational physicians invited are the President and the Secretary of the American Occupational Medical Association, K. D. McMurray, Jr., M.D., and T. Forrest Fisher, M.D., respectively, and Bruce Karrh, M.D., AQMA Board member. Attendees at the meeting will attempt to reach agreement concerning the indicators that can be used by OSHA inspectors to determine whether serious health hazards are likely to be present at an establishment and whether a comprehensive health inspection is indicated.

20 RESEARCH PROJECT GRANTS

Grants covering 20 research projects for the study of occupational diseases, injuries, and other disorders were awarded in September by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health just before the end of fiscal 1982. Some of the grants funded entire new projects, but many were renewals. Following is the list of subjects to be investigated and the amounts awarded to various institutions for the research:

- * Factors in the uptake and elimination of chemicals in the skin -- University of South Alabama, \$149,067
- * Job conditions, occupations and cardiovascular disease -- Columbia University School of Engineering, \$135,114
- * Etiological factors in industrial low back injury -- University of Washington, \$133,37
- * Occupational exposure of parents and tumors in their offspring -- University of Southern California, \$128,242
- * Carcinogen/mutagen detector for high pressure liquid chromatography -- Case Western Reserve University, \$118,082
- * Mechanical stress to the spine resulting from back injuries -- University of Illinois, \$100,550
- * Occupational neuropathies due to industrial chemicals -- Duke University, \$97,045
- * Biophysical and physiological evaluation of heat stress -- John B. Pierce Foundation, \$91,253
- * Aflatoxin exposures of agricultural workers -- University of Cincinnati, \$80,990
- * Occupational hazards to male and female fertility -- University of California at Davis, \$79,529
- * Toxicology of industrial chemicals acting on the central nervous system -- Albert Einstein College of Medicine, \$65,935
- * Measurement of dermal exposure to chemical hazards -- University of California at Berkeley, \$65,884
- * Activity of amosite asbestos and grunerite fiber, American Museum of Natural History, \$60,806
- * Spermatogenic transfer and effects of mutagens -- University of Texas at Galveston, \$57,119
- * Control of contaminants from open vessels -- Pennsylvania State University, \$55,353
- * Dust and silicosis in mining and minerals industries -- University of North Carolina, \$53,516
- * Acceptable weight of lift for extended work shifts -- University of Cincinnati, \$51,692
- * Portable parallel stage impactor -- University of Pittsburgh, \$42,388
- * Carcinogenic properties of nitrous oxide -- Stanford University, \$33,350
- * Respiratory disease in the furniture industry -- University of North Carolina, \$27,846

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