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HIGHLIGHTS OF CURRENT REPORT

File Reports

A LEAD STANDARD STAY requested by the Lead Industries Association, Inc., would not serve the public interest, the U.S. Solicitor General asserts in a memorandum filed with the U.S. Supreme Court. Employee monitoring and medical testing requirements currently imposed by the standard provide direct evidence of whether employees are facing a dangerously high level of lead exposure, according to the memorandum (p. 713).

NO EXCESSIVE RATES of leukemia or any other forms of cancer are found by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. Results of a two-year investigation indicate that 39 cases of leukemia were found in a cohort of 25,000 workers, as compared with 41.5 expected, NIOSH reports (p. 713).

PESTICIDE EXPOSURE HAZARDS may be addressed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in a performance-oriented standard, OSHA announces. The agency schedules a series of public meetings to gather information pertaining to the creation of such a standard, including data on the risks of pesticide exposure during manufacture and formulation, as well as the need for such a regulation and its possible costs (p. 713) . . . Text of agency notice of meetings and request for information (p. 730).

THE COTTON DUST STANDARD should be rejected because OSHA made no attempt to determine if the benefits of the rule are reasonable in light of its costs, the American Textile Manufacturers Institute and the National Cotton Council of America argue in petitions to the U.S. Supreme Court. The industry representatives charge that OSHA treats the costs of standards as being "totally irrelevant" until they reach an undefined point at which the rules would "cause the destruction of an entire industry" (p. 714).

INCLUSION OF ASPHALT and various other substances under the "candidates list" of the carcinogens standard is criticized as unwarranted by several industries and individuals in comments to OSHA. While coal tar pitch is a known car-

cinogen, no studies indicate that exposure to petroleum asphalt presents health hazards, the commentators suggest (p. 715).

FOUR MORTALITY STUDIES involving chemical workers and morticians exposed to formaldehyde found no excessive cancer rates in those groups, researchers tell a Chemical Industry Institute of Toxicology conference. The meeting also is told that a matter for further study involves the differences in the way various species of animals respond to formaldehyde (p. 716).

THE MOST HAZARDOUS JOB in the U.S. continues to be firefighting, the International Association of Fire Fighters asserts in issuing a survey of death and injury rates for 1979. The union finds that firefighters last year suffered 70 deaths and 45,070 injuries in the line of duty (p. 717).

WALKAROUND PAY RULES proposed by OSHA are criticized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In a letter to Assistant Labor Secretary Eula Bingham, the Chamber's senior vice president charges that OSHA's shortening of the public comment period for the proposal represents a "transparent effort" to enact a new walkaround pay standard before the Reagan Administration takes office (p. 717).

FILE THIS CURRENT REPORT and those following through May 28, 1981, in the December-May Current Reports binder. Remove the 1979-80 issues and indexes from that binder but retain the index tab. It is the policy of Occupational Safety & Health Reporter to supply subscribers with two Current Reports binders as part of their regular service. Each is designed to hold six months of reports. Should you wish a Universal Transfer binder, which will hold a one-year volume of Current Reports, they are available for \$10 each from Occupational Safety & Health Reporter, The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., 1231 25th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

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