

NEWS From



Lead Industries Association, Inc.

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Further information: Don G. Fowler

Los Angeles, Cal., Dec. 17 -- The findings of Clair C. Patterson, of the division of geological sciences, California Institute of Technology, as to the distribution of lead particles throughout the strata of the oceans and the earth may be of academic interest, but they have no real bearing on the public health aspects of lead, Don G. Fowler, Director of Health and Safety, Lead Industries Association, declared today.

Mr. Fowler's statement was made in the light of the current publicity given Mr. Patterson's work in Los Angeles.

"The Patterson findings," Mr. Fowler pointed out, "are based on his own geological studies and his own interpretations of the occurrence of lead particles throughout the oceans and the earth. It is impossible," he stated, "to interpret geological findings in biological terms."

"All of the accepted medical evidence," he declared, "proves conclusively that the amount of lead particles to which the public is exposed--whether in the air they breathe or in the food and beverages they consume--is well within recognized limits of safety. Antiknock compounds," he pointed out, "contribute only a portion of the total amount of lead particles found in the atmosphere. Other sources," he said, "include the combustion of wood, coal and vegetable matter; lead in the soil; and man-made products containing lead. Furthermore, comprehensive medical studies have shown that over the years there has been no significant accumulation of lead in the human body, which is the basic criterion. The mass of evidence proves conclusively that lead is not a significant factor in air pollution and represents no public health problem in any way."

"This assurance of safety," Mr. Fowler continued, "rests not only upon independent public health studies but also upon approximately 40 years of physiological research conducted at the Kettering Laboratory in the College of Medicine at the University of Cincinnati. This work is being conducted under the direction of Dr. Robert A. Kehoe, a recognized world authority on the medical aspects of environmental lead, and it has been endorsed by the oil and chemical industries as well as by the lead consuming industries."

"In addition," Mr. Fowler said, "extensive atmospheric investigations, conducted over the last five years in conjunction with the U. S. Public Health Service and state public health authorities confirm the findings of the Kettering Laboratory and reveal no potentially hazardous lead levels either in Los Angeles or anywhere else in the United States."

"In the light of this great weight of medical evidence," Mr. Fowler said, "the public can rest assured that lead constitutes no public health problem."