

In Rebuttal to Lead-in-Paint Editorial

This is Reprinted From the March 31 *Courier Journal*, Louisville, Ky.—Ed.

Replying to the March 17 editorial, "Lead in Paint: After 20 years a decision based on people," we offer these points in rebuttal:

(1) There are no documented deaths on record which are attributed directly to the ingestion of dried paint film with lead content;

(2) The reduced levels of lead content in paint recently set by the FDA Commissioner are arbitrary and not founded on medical fact;

(3) Assuming 76 New York City paint manufacturers to be representative of the over 1,000 companies in the industry is improper survey technique demographically, irresponsible editorializing and unnecessarily damaging to an industry, especially a significant Louisville industry (Louisville ranks fifth in paint production in the U.S.).

Today's paints are safe. They are not intended to be either eaten or drunk. They are intended to beautify and protect surfaces. Children who eat dirt, plaster, paint, and all else within reach as a regular diet are generally suffering from "pica," a disease stemming from malnutrition. Such children generally reside in poor areas of communities where paint and plaster are crumbling from wall surfaces. These are not surfaces painted with today's paint of low lead content but are pre-World War II paints of high lead con-

tent. To regulate today's paint formulations arbitrarily does nothing for walls, wherein the problem lies.

Medical students are taught that upon diagnosing high lead content in a child's blood, the proper next step is to have the social worker investigate the residence to determine if plaster has been eaten. Paint is not questioned in the text. Is it possible that ingested plaster is the real culprit? No studies have been made to determine this.

If a mother is seeking a child-safe paint, we recommend that she read the caution on the back of the paint label. If it does not say, "Contains Lead," she can feel safe in using it. Through the years the paint industry has been responsive to the needs of its consumers by such precautionary labeling.

Now, it is time to stop levying unfounded regulations upon industry, paint or any other. The price we will all soon be paying as a result of hysterical governmental reaction to "consumerism" will be so astronomical as to cause the wheels of lawful and responsible industry to grind to a stop. Only the unlawful will be able to operate profitably in meeting the demands for goods of the buying public.

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M. B. Hollander To Head Gulf + Western Technology

New York, April 20—Milton B. Hollander, 43, former vice president in charge of research and development activities at American Standard, Inc., will be elected to the new position of vice president-technology of Gulf + Western Industries, Inc., it was announced by David N. Judelson, Gulf +

Western president.

Dr. Hollander will coordinate expanding research and scientific programs underway at Gulf + Western, Mr. Judelson said.

Among the operations under Dr. Hollander's supervision will be the company's principal research and development center at Swarthmore, Pa. Gulf + Western has more than 12 R & D centers throughout the country.

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