

INDUSTRY'S ROLE IN PREVENTING LEAD POISONING

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The Lead Industries Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization of representatives of lead mining, smelting, refining and fabricating companies throughout the non-communist bloc of nations. Among other things, its purposes are to disseminate accurate information regarding lead products and how they are properly used, and to promote the serviceability of lead industries to the community at large.

As a continuing part of our interest in the community, we have for many years, both alone and in cooperation with governmental, professional, industrial and academic groups, worked towards the elimination of the tragic problem of lead poisoning in children. Since the 1920's the lead industry has supported research on the metabolism of lead and the diagnosis and treatment of lead poisoning in an effort to bring about better understanding of the problems of plumbism. Such studies have been carried out at numerous educational institutions and private laboratories throughout the world. Information developed under our sponsorship has been distributed in medical and public health journals, and at various lead symposia conducted by LIA, both alone and in cooperation with organizations such as the American Medical Association and the American Industrial Hygiene Association.

As we know, progress is being made in many cities to bring the problem of pediatric lead poisoning under control and to reduce or eliminate deaths or serious disabilities resulting from lead paint ingestion. However, lead problems are still occurring despite many

years of effort, and will continue to occur in children who live in old and poorly maintained homes that are not yet free of old leaded paint.

In the publication, "Lead Poisoning in Children," published by the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, it is stated that lead poisoning was not found among children in newly constructed housing projects in New York City, even when these were in districts which had a high incidence of childhood lead intoxication. This indicates that lead poisoning is unquestionably linked to old dilapidated housing. This observation was further confirmed by a well-known study in Cleveland, where it was reported that of 801 young children in old housing, 38 children or 4.7 per cent had plumbism, while not one case of plumbism was found among 105 children who lived in a new housing project.

The Lead Industries Association has supported and encouraged the efforts of the Federal Government, states, localities and community action groups in the formulation and enactment of effective programs to eliminate the source of childhood lead poisoning. We have developed a proposed municipal ordinance, based on the Philadelphia law and its effectiveness, which is available to communities upon request. The Lead Industries Association will continue to cooperate with all groups sincerely working toward our mutual goal of preventing lead poisoning in children.