

PUBLICIZING SAFETY

It is essential to use the light, human touch in stories, illustrations, features, and safety films. Chances are, there will be enough solemn stuff to balance the gaiety. This does not mean one should make fun of accident victims or of safety, but the treatment can be lightened by "unstuffing" safety a bit.

Some Basics of Publicity

If a company does not have a publicity department, this fact need not kill off all chances of getting publicity into local papers or on the air.

It hurts, of course, for publicity men are pros in getting publicity and naturally know their way around in media circles better than a safety man does. However, even in the absence of a company publicity department, the safety man can get publicity for safety activities by going directly to the newspapers, magazines, and radio and TV.

The safety director should not pretend to the editors and the program managers that he is a publicity expert. On the contrary, he should cash in on his innocence of any of the wiles professional publicity men employ to wangle space or time.

Editors and program people are usually not difficult to approach—provided that the safety man is courteous and friendly and shows the proper humility. Naturally no editor or anyone else likes to have someone come charging in and pretend that he is doing a big favor by delivering a story the world has been waiting for.

The common sense and salesmanship needed for success in the safety field certainly are enough to enable the safety man to present his case clearly and effectively to the paper or radio station.

Handling an accident story

In any public relations or publicity program, it is just as important to know what

Fig. 8-6 TV news crew interviews Howard Pyle, president of the National Safety Council. Visiting dignitaries and presentation of National Safety Council awards create excellent opportunities for top-drawer publicity.

