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Literature--News--Developments

News Items

418 Malnutrition.

The National Nutrition Conference on Defense, which was recently held in Washington, D. C., included two sessions presented by the Section on Nutrition in Industry. The effects of malnutrition on working efficiency, also measures for improving the diet and nutrition of workers were discussed. Recent dietary studies among large representative samples of the people of the United States, clinical studies among smaller groups, and the examination of men called up for military service show clearly that poor diets and undernourishment are widespread in the country. While there is no ground for alarmist statements, the facts are serious enough to be a genuine cause of weakness in the present national emergency and to warrant national attention and concerted action. Undernourishment is more insidious and less obvious in its effects than a disease epidemic, but it is not less harmful. Recommendations made to the Conference by this Section included: (1) special attention should be paid to the diet of all workers and particularly to the diet of defense workers, and (2) the cooperation of each State should be enlisted by urging the governor to call a State-wide nutritional conference. The efforts should include an educational campaign, and provision for restaurant and lunch facilities in factories. Defense 2, 19, (June 3, 1941) and Industrial Hygiene, 1, 2 (May, 1941).

419 Occupational Health Exposures as Related to the Open Factory Window.

There is a tendency during the warm summer months to open windows in an attempt to obtain better ventilation. In many factories and workshops there are occupational health hazards effectively controlled by means of local exhaust system whose exact balance may be upset by stray air currents. In this way, toxic materials may be swept into the general atmosphere and endanger the health of the workers. Under normal room air conditions processes, such as acid dipping, alkali cleaning, electroplating, lacquer dipping, lead hardening, spray painting, or vapor degreasing by means of chlorinated hydrocarbons, may be operated with the health hazards fully under control, but a breeze or draft from an open window may offset, to a major extent, the mechanical means provided to guard against dissemination of toxic materials. It often happens that the discharge of a local exhaust system is relatively near a window so that when opened, toxic materials may be returned to the workroom. This is particularly true when the discharge is opposed to the prevailing summer wind. During warm weather, it is essential for comfort, unless air conditioning is provided, that many windows be opened. However, care must be taken to eliminate drafts in the vicinity of processes involving the use of toxic materials, through the erection of suitable baffles or the locking of occasional windows thereby assuring the effective operation of existing control measures. Conn. Health Bull., 55, 145 (May, 1941).