

W. H. H. H.

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To: Mr. Ziegfeld

December 16, 1952

From: Manfred Bowditch

Subject: 1952 ACTIVITIES

The following is a brief outline of Health and Safety activities during the first eleven months of 1952. A more comprehensive report will be made to the members of our Association when records for the full year are available.

CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING This problem continues to be a major "headache" and a source of much adverse publicity, of which the Baltimore publications herewith are but two examples. No accurate estimate of its prevalence is possible, but these figures on 1952 reports from a few communities with which we are in touch will serve to point up its importance.

	<u>All Cases</u>	<u>Fatal Cases</u>
Atlanta	3	0
Baltimore	26	4
Boston	5	1
Cincinnati	12	4
Cleveland	16	5
New Castle, Pa.	15	3
New York	44	14
St. Louis	61	4
Washington	11	4
miscellaneous	4	1
	<u>197</u>	<u>40</u>

Most of the above figures are incomplete; this is particularly true of those for New York City, which are based on estimates by the Assistant Health Commissioner, Mr. Trichter, whose present illness has delayed the further report promised. Detailed investigation of any such large number of cases to determine their validity would be prohibitively expensive and time consuming, as witness the costs of the current Baltimore (\$10,000 for one year) and Boston (\$2,500 to \$3,000 per year) studies. But granting that many could be shown to be of doubtful validity, this would not lessen the adverse publicity, and it is my considered opinion that we must find means of securing more accurate diagnosis of lead poisoning or face the likelihood of widespread governmental prohibition of the use of lead paints on dwellings.

INDUSTRIAL LEAD POISONING Due to widespread lack of knowledge in the medical profession of the causes and diagnosis of lead poisoning, as well as the fact that it is not a reportable disease and the factor of deliberate "covering up," no useful estimate of its prevalence in the adult population is possible. Although its incidence in the painting trade has undoubtedly lessened substantially in the last several decades, Dr. Robert A. Kehoe, Director of the Kettering Laboratory and an internationally recognized authority on this subject, gave the opinion in an address on November 19, 1952 at the annual meeting of the Industrial Hygiene Foundation, of which Mr. Fletcher is the Chairman, that plumbism is as common in industry today as it was in much earlier times.

Box 47 base

Box 7 / Roswell A

Annual Meeting:

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April 9-10, 1953

LEAD HYGIENE

The following is a summary of our principal activities in the field of lead hygiene:

1. Childhood lead poisoning continued to be a major problem and source of much adverse publicity. Consequently we continued our grant of \$2,200 per year to the Harvard Medical School to study this problem. A new grant of \$10,000 for a year's intensive study of the problem was made to the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, the work starting in July, 1952.

2. A new drug, Ca EDTA (calcium ethylenediaminetetraacetate) has been under investigation as an antidote for lead poisoning. Indications are sufficiently favorable and interest so broad, that we are serving as a clearing house for information and otherwise aiding in the development.

3. Our investigation of the safety of red lead paints for water tank interiors, which previously revealed sufficiently favorable data to remove an objectionable paragraph from a federal specification, has been continued to assure us of adequate data to combat any future attacks on red lead in this direction.

4. The Association is sponsoring and is represented on a committee of the American Standards Association which will endeavor to establish standards for the safe labeling of paint to be used on children's furniture and toys.

5. Our efforts to have provided throughout the country adequate laboratory facilities to make reliable lead determinations to aid in accurate diagnosis of lead poisoning are bearing fruit. Most recently this has been noticeable in Cleveland and Salt Lake City.

6. Arrangements were made to have a scientific exhibit, at no cost to us for space, at the annual meeting of the American Medical Association in New York in June, 1953. This was by invitation and will be one of a group of exhibits on childhood accidents. Ours will be devoted to educating doctors in childhood plumbism.

7. Eleven Hygiene and Safety Bulletins were issued during 1952. Of these seven were Legislative Reports, mailed only to members who had signified an interest in them. The data used in compiling the Legislative Reports have been useful in several instances in nipping ill-advised and discriminatory state legislation in the bud.

8. Nearly 500 newspaper clippings featuring lead poisoning, often in sizeable headlines, were received in 1952. Those involving the most flagrant and obvious misstatement of fact have been followed up with a view to correcting the underlying misconceptions.

9. Many meetings of organizations dealing with our own health problems were attended. They included the American Industrial Hygiene Association, American Medical Association, Congress on Industrial Health of the A.A.A., American Public Health Association, Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, Greater New York Safety Council, Industrial Hygiene Foundation, Massachusetts Medical Society and the National Safety Council. Our Health and Safety Director took part as a speaker in three of those meetings and also attended a number of smaller or specialized meetings.

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