

ANNUAL REPORT  
INDUSTRIAL HEALTH SECTION

1948

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Plant Surveys

A total of 66 surveys of health conditions was conducted in the plants of our Group policyholders by the members of the Industrial Hygiene Laboratory Staff during the year 1948. While this is a decrease in the number made in 1947, the plants surveyed were larger and, therefore, affected the health of many more of our Group certificate holders.

The Laboratory, in conjunction with the United States Public Health Service, undertook a study of the use of sodium fluoride during the pouring of rim steel in open hearth furnaces. This study was taken at the joint request of the United Steel Workers of America—G.I.O. and the Republic Steel Company. The addition of sodium fluoride to molten steel at the time it is poured into molds helps produce an unusually tough steel which is free from blow holes. It does not create a health hazard which could be attributed to the use of sodium fluoride. This conclusion concurs with the findings that we have made of tests taken of these operations covering a period of three years.

In 1935, the Buffalo, New York plant of the Republic Steel Corporation was insured for Group insurance. A survey was made of the plant and recommendations for the control of hazards found were sent to the Management of the Republic Steel Corporation. Based on this service, the Republic Steel Corporation insured the lives of all their employees with the understanding that every plant would be surveyed once every two years. The Republic Steel Corporation is now requesting that surveys be made annually in all their plants.

by cleaning fluid. Studies were also made of noise in their I.B.M. machine rooms and some suggestions were made to improve the condition.

The following are some representative plants which were surveyed during the year:

The Flintkote Company  
Allied Industrial Products  
~~Corning~~ Glass Works  
Republic Steel Corporation  
General Electric Company  
Johns-Manville Company ✓  
Diamond Alkali Company  
~~Rochester Gas & Electric~~ Company  
McCrory Stores  
Evening Bulletin  
Western Biscuit Company  
Standard Bleachery Printing Company

#### Laboratory Analyses

Samples collected in the plants and sent to the Home Office necessitated making 3,165 analyses.

These entailed analyses of the regular run of substances such as silica, asbestos, lead, manganese, mercury, fluorine, acids, solvents, hydrocarbons, etc.

#### Home Office Inspections

Studies are being conducted in the Home Office Divisions where I.B.M. Punch Press machines are operated in an attempt to find ways of eliminating the noise.

Samples of the wash water and soap solutions used in the Commissary Division were tested because some cases of dermatitis had been reported to the Medical Division.

A two-year study has been made of the use of triethylene glycol for the prevention of colds and other respiratory conditions. One section of our air conditioned building where about 500 employees are located was used as the treatment room and a control room was set up in another part of the air conditioned unit. During the latter half of the past year, the employees which had previously been used as controls were treated with the triethylene glycol, and those which previously had been treated were now used as controls. Records were kept of the respiratory infections of both groups and bacterial counts were made in these rooms. The results were negative and the study was discontinued.

#### Fluorescent Lighting Study

The experimental fluorescent lighting installation on the 14th floor of Unit 1 was completed during the year and the report of the Lighting Committee has been submitted.

#### Lighting Complaints

During the year of 1948, Dr. McConnell received 28 complaints of poor lighting. Inspections were made and recommendations submitted for improvement.

#### Travel Credit

The amount of credit received from our Group policyholders during the year of 1948 amounted to \$7,166. 51. This represents incidental expenses of travel and maintenance in the field incurred by our Laboratory Technicians while surveying the individual plants. The General Electric Company partially pays

employees of the Home Office. This article was reprinted by the Reader's Digest and we were deluged with requests for our opinion as to their efficiency.

The Group insured firms have been continuing to send in for interpretation the x-rays of the chests of their employees who have been exposed to toxic dusts, fumes and gases.

#### Literature

Sixty-two thousand two hundred seventy-four (62,274) copies of our booklets were sent out during the year upon request. Of this number, 38,259 are copies of the booklet "Facts About Menstruation." Letters were sent to the Medical Directors of Groups for information on the number of copies of this booklet they wished to distribute among their employees. The response was very gratifying.

A new procedure for replying to requests for large supplies of literature from non-policyholders has been negotiated during the year. All such requests are sent to the Group Sales Research Division for advice as to the inquirers' insurance status, i.e., whether covered by another insurance company, a prospect, or no record. The way the request is answered is dependent on this information.

#### Publications

The booklet "Silicosis" was completely revised during 1948. The publication "First Aid" has been completely revised and will be published shortly.

Assistance was rendered in the revision of the booklet on "Tularemia."

The report entitled "Medical Service for Army Ordinance Plants" was revised by Dr. McConnell at the request of the Surgeon General of the United

States Army.

A booklet entitled "Decompression Sickness" was prepared for the Merck Manual.

#### Meetings and Conferences

##### Dr. Lanza

During the year, Dr. Lanza attended 57 meetings and conferences held in different parts of the country or in the Home Office Building.

He gave a paper at the Fifth Post Graduate Course in Industrial Medicine at the Long Island Medical College and one on Industrial Medicine to the Staff of the North Country Community Hospital, Westbury, Long Island.

##### Dr. McConnell

During the year, Dr. McConnell attended 28 meetings and conferences, and gave two lectures to the class of the Institute of Industrial and Social Medicine of the New York University.

##### Mr. Fehnel

Mr. Fehnel attended three committee meetings during the year.

#### Committees

Dr. McConnell has been invited by Mr. Edward Corsi, Industrial Commissioner of the State of New York Department of Labor to become a member of the Advisory Committee for preparing proposed rules relating to Control of Silica Dust in Stone Crushing Operations.

Mr. Fehnel has been asked to serve on the Nominating Committee for Governing Council Members as the representative of the Industrial Hygiene Section of

the American Public Health Association.

He has also been asked to serve on the Subcommittee on Eye Protection of the American Standards Association Safety Code for the Protection of Head, Eyes and Respiratory Organs.

Testimonials

There are attached a few of the many letters we have received telling of the value of our services.

Dr. Henry Almond, formerly Medical Director of the Brown Company, Berlin, New Hampshire joined the Staff of the Industrial Health Section on July 5, 1948.

Dr. A. J. Lanza retired on December 31, 1948 to take up full time his duties with the Institute of Industrial Medicine of the New York University, Bellevue Medical Center.

SUMMARY OF WORK OF INDUSTRIAL HEALTH SECTION

DURING THE YEAR 1948

|                                                              |            |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---|
| Surveys conducted by Industrial Hygiene Laboratory . . . . . | 66         | ✓ |
| Analyses made in Laboratory . . . . .                        | 3,165      | ✓ |
| Home Office Inspections . . . . .                            | 2          |   |
| Lighting Inspections . . . . .                               | 28         | ✓ |
| Group requests . . . . .                                     | 304        |   |
| Non-policyholder requests . . . . .                          | 1,624      |   |
| Prospects . . . . .                                          | 3          |   |
| Metropolitan requests . . . . .                              | 63         |   |
| Literature . . . . .                                         | 62,274     | ✓ |
| Conferences and Meetings . . . . .                           | 88         |   |
| Travel Credit . . . . .                                      | \$7,166.51 |   |
| Publications completely revised . . . . .                    | 2          |   |
| Publications partially revised . . . . .                     | 1          |   |
| Publications written for outside organizations . . . . .     | 2          |   |

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