

The United Steelworkers of America urged the aluminum industry to take prompt action, including stepped-up environmental and medical monitoring to curb the increased risk of cancer.

The association said that the leukemia mortality was somewhat greater for potroom workers, but this was found not to be related to duration of employment or date of initial employment.

Upward trends were reported in lung cancer among workers in potrooms, paste and carbon rooms, and cast houses associated with smelters. Among potroom workers, there also appeared to be an upward trend in the occurrence of lung cancer with increased duration of employment. The association said that more in-depth studies of these areas will be forthcoming.

Union and industry representatives were scheduled to meet with investigators from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in Rockville, Md., December 13, to review the preliminary findings of the study and the association's plans for a final report projected for March 1, 1977, according to the Steelworkers.

The association said the research involved tracing down employees, then examining death certificates of those who died to determine the cause. These causes were then compared with government figures to determine where there might be excesses that might be traced to conditions on the job, the association explained.

Health Hazards

GRUMMAN CHANGES ITS WATER SUPPLY FOR PLANT WHERE VC WAS DISCOVERED

Grumman Corporation in Nassau County, N.Y., has begun pumping drinking water from new sources to its aircraft assembly plant where workers were left unaware for a year that vinyl chloride, a suspected carcinogen, had been found in the water.

Grumman shut down five of 14 wells supplying the Bethpage, Long Island, plant in August 1975 when the chemical was discovered but never informed the 20,000 employees.

A state assembly health subcommittee is conducting hearings to determine why neither Grumman nor the Nassau County Health Department publicized the reason for closing the wells.

In a related development, the health department December 13 ordered closed Well No. 9 of the Bethpage Water District, which serves the public, after analysis showed the presence of 100 micrograms/liter of tetrachloroethylene, another suspected carcinogen. One week ago two other public wells in the area also were closed.

Gerard Donohue, deputy director of Environmental Health Services for the county, told OSHR the wells were closed because of the presence "of various suspected carcinogens." Donohue said a program of analyzing water samples from area wells by the Environmental Protection Agency and state health laboratory in Albany would continue.

Grumman has arranged to bring in public water from sources farther away than its original wells for its workers to drink. Robert H. Niebling, executive deputy commissioner of health for the county, told OSHR.

Donohue said the health department's Bureau of Water Pollution Control and other agencies were searching for possible sources of the vinyl chloride and other substances found in the water, such as dichloroethylene and trichloroethylene. He said the search included a firm

located near Grumman, the Hooker Chemical Company, which was known to produce polyvinyl chloride and dispose of its PVC wastes in the ground.

Niebling said it is known that breathing airborne vinyl chloride can lead to cancer of the liver but its effects from ingestion are not clear. "I don't think anything is known at the present time of its effects in drinking water," he said, adding that the department "wants to be very conservative" by closing the wells. Like Grumman, the towns of Bethpage and Hicksville, Long Island, can obtain drinking water from sources farther away while the wells in the immediate area remain closed, Donohue said. He noted that in 1975 before the controversy erupted publicly, the county health department had to wait up to six months for results from EPA and the Albany laboratory of water analyses. In the past couple of weeks, the results have been reported within three days to a week.

Testing of the water began in April 1974 when Grumman reported to the health department that its drinking water was affected by an odor. The first tests showed negative results. Another set of tests in the summer of 1975 turned up vinyl chloride and Grumman simultaneously closed the wells.

Donohue said the tetrachloroethylene found in the Bethpage well is of "less concern" than vinyl chloride to the department and he noted that the amount is equivalent to 100 parts per billion in the water.

He said the results of a study by the National Academy of Science, expected in March 1977, on the health effects of "these exotic chemicals" would be significant. "At the present time our ability to analyze what is contained in the water exceeds the ability of the medical profession to tell us its significance," he said.

Oregon

WARRANTLESS SEARCH IS INVALID, STATE CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE DECIDES

The clause of the Oregon Safety Employment Act that permits inspection of a workplace without a warrant based on probable cause violates the Oregon Constitution and the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, a state circuit court judge decided.

Judge Walter I. Edmonds, Jr., of the Circuit Court for Jefferson County ruled on November 1 in *State of Oregon v. Keith R. Foster d/b/a Keith Manufacturing Company* (No. 5943) that the Accident Prevention Division of the state Workmen's Compensation Board is not entitled to inspect the defendant employer's premises absent a showing of probable cause that a violation of safety or health standards exists.

A Safety Compliance Officer of the Accident Prevention Division (APD) attempted three times to inspect the employer's workplace, but was denied entry each time. In its application to the court for an inspection warrant, APD merely stated that it sought to make a "routine inspection" and that the employer had not been inspected for over a year.

The Oregon Safety Employment Act, ORS 654.206(2), provides that cause for the issuance of an inspection warrant "shall be deemed to exist if reasonable legislative or administrative standards for conducting such a routine, periodic or area inspection are satisfied." This provision "violates the prohibition against unreasonable searches and seizures found in the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution and in Article I, Section 9 of the Oregon