

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ALAMOS SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY
(CONTRACT W-7405-ENG-36)
P. O. Box 1663
Los Alamos, New Mexico

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

H

June 9, 1954

Mr. Manfred Bowditch
Lead Industries Association
420 Lexington Avenue
New York 17, New York

Dear Manfred:

As you know, I do not intend to be present at the San Francisco meeting. I do agree, however, very wholeheartedly that that session would be the best possible place for a discussion of the prophylactic use of EDTA. It would be my hope that out of this discussion should come a directive to the Council on Industrial Health to publish in the Journal a strongly worded protest and recommendation against such a practice. There should be an attempt to have such a communication reprinted at the earliest opportunity not only in the Archives, the AIHA Quarterly, and Industrial Medicine, but also in as many pertinent trade journals as can be reached. This would require that the communication be phrased so that it could be easily understood by the layman.

I can conceive of a situation where a bad lead exposure might turn up in a plant, particularly a small one. There would be a presumption that the workers already had considerable absorption. It might be justifiable under certain circumstances to start administration of EDTA on a semi-preventive, semi-therapeutic basis, only during the period when more conventional safeguards were being introduced. Other than this, I would regard the administration of EDTA, except for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, as a most reprehensible practice.

It should be possible to give this matter wide publicity in addition to the journals indicated above. The material could be spread through newsletters of the IMA, AIHA, and similar organizations. The safety engineering journals, the news media of the ACGIH, and the various state agencies should be included. I am sure that the Industrial Hygiene Foundation would pick it up automatically.

Los Alamos recently had a serious forest fire which resulted from some well-intended efforts on the part of a group of amateurs to clean up a campsite so that it would not be a fire hazard. I visualize the prophylactic use of EDTA as leading us down a path which will have some

KE 0006166

N 7507

Manfred Bowditch

-2-

June 9, 1954

corpses at its end. It is not a dependable or a proper method of preventing occupational disease, and it is a procedure which should be strongly condemned.

Very sincerely yours,

THOMAS L. SHIPMAN, M. D.,
Health Division Leader

TLS/lca

cc: Dr. Kehoe
Dr. Elkins
Dr. Hamlin
Dr. Hardy
Dr. Johnstone
Dr. McGee
Dr. Peterson
Dr. Sander
Dr. Shepard
Dr. Sterner

LASL: Dr. Foreman, H-4
Dr. Whipple, H-2
H. Schulte, H-5
File

KE 0006167