

## Work-Exposure Rules On 5 Major Hazards Expected by Year-End

By THE WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

WASHINGTON—The Labor Department expects to adopt limits on worker exposure to five major health hazards by year-end, but the long-awaited standard on noise levels probably won't be among them.

Eula Bingham, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, said final rules controlling workers' exposure to arsenic, benzene, cotton dust and lead likely will be issued during the next seven months. The rules currently are in various stages of the legal standard-setting process.

A fifth standard, dealing with cancer but without citing any particular chemical, probably will be issued about September, she told reporters. This will be the first in a planned series of "generic" standards, setting up procedures to guard workers against broad categories of cancer-causing chemicals. Once the generic rules are in place, the

agency plans merely to insert the names of individual chemicals that it determines may cause cancer.

The noise standard, under development for several years, is being held up because portions of the official transcript of a hearing on the issue are "unintelligible," according to Labor Department officials. The transcribing company that made the texts has gone out of business, complicating the effort to unscramble them.

In addition, Miss Bingham said she is bringing in an outside expert to help the agency decide on the design of the noise rule, which would affect more workers and employers than any other occupational health regulation. Business already has claimed that the cost of clamping down on

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work-place noise is too high.

The safety chief said her agency soon will be considering controls on nickel, chromates, beryllium, sulphur dioxide, and acrylonitrile, a synthetic textile substance recently identified as a possible cause of cancer. Hearings on some of these chemicals already have been held, but work has just begun on others.

On another matter, the assistant secretary said that if the Supreme Court upholds a lower federal court's ruling requiring job safety inspectors to obtain warrants before entering work places, the agency would be hurt but could adjust. "If we have to get a warrant, that's what we shall do," she said.

**THE HARD SELL:** Eula Bingham, new boss of the federal job safety agency, OSHA, showed up at a National Industrial Hygienists convention last week wearing a red T-shirt that said "OSHA wants you—enlist now." Her aides at the meeting wore "enlist in OSHA" buttons. The job safety agency is trying to hire about 300 hygienists.