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The Decade of Job Safety

Our Brotherhood Presses Forward With Thorough Job Safety Program

Preliminary findings of the IBPAT mobile van testing program are beginning to come into our Brotherhood's Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

General President S. Frank Rafferty has said that a complete medical profile of the members tested will be ready by mid-1975.

The 23d General Convention in Los Angeles was the site of the kickoff of the Brotherhood's most extensive and ambitious safety and health program in its history. Results of tests made there are now being studied.

General President Rafferty at the time told Convention delegates that the coming years will be the "decade of job safety." Also present at the convention was Dr. Irving J. Selikoff, the nation's leading authority on environmental medicine, and Director of Environmental Medicine at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in New York.

According to preliminary test findings—yet to be verified by further testing throughout the U.S. and Canada—Brotherhood members may be exposed to very hazardous solvents.

The results of the tests taken in Los Angeles and of future tests to be taken at from 15 to 20 locations will indicate the health areas of greatest interest to IBPAT health and safety specialists.

Moreover, as the mobile test unit travels throughout the U.S. and Canada, the tests will be refined to focus on areas of

immediate concern to the membership.

Continued testing is important, for as President Rafferty has said, IBPAT members consistently rank among the top five construction trades in the average number of worker's compensation awards they receive. Painters and allied tradesmen consistently face many work-related health hazards, whether working with compounds found in paint, varnish, solvents and exotic coatings, or with such materials as gypsum board. IBPAT members also work often in extremely dangerous places—atop skyscrapers or on bridges.

"With us, safety is not a one-shot deal," General President Rafferty has said, and he points to IBPAT efforts on behalf of health and safety which go back to the years the union worked hard supporting passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. The bill was finally passed by Congress in 1970 and went into effect in 1971. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is the U.S. Department of Labor agency charged with overseeing health and safety on job sites.

The mobile diagnostic van, from which initial test results are now coming in, is a cooperative effort of IBPAT and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), which contracted with the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine to operate the van.

Following its "test" run during the Convention, the van is now

ready to begin the first phase of a three-part testing program by screening IBPAT members in 15 to 20 locations.

About 800 members are to be tested during this phase of the program, which will be the clinical survey phase of the program. In addition to the long clinical survey, there will be a mortality study and an industrial hygiene survey.

The first phase—funded to \$98,000 by NIOSH—will take about a year, says Dr. Selikoff. He said that members are being tested for, among other things, exposure to titanium



Mobile Van Schedule

IBPAT's Mobile Diagnostic Unit will make its first stop in Toledo, Ohio. The van will be located at the Union Health Center there, and will conduct medical tests for Brotherhood members from January 12 through February 1.

The second city on the van schedule will be St. Louis, Mo., where it will examine members from February 22 through March 1. Local officials will provide IBPAT members in both areas with further details.

The locations of future mobile van stops will be reported in coming issues of THE JOURNAL.

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