

Indiana as a result of passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act and the State Safety Act.

In a letter to Labor Department Secretary James D. Hodgson, CIAPA Executive Director Stephen Stoughton requested any assistance the Labor Department might be able to provide.

Stoughton listed two purposes for the safety program. The first will be to brief top management on safety and health regulations for construction and the implications of the Act regarding fines. The theme will be to make the contractor aware of necessary costs that will be incurred because of standards in effect. These facts will be conveyed through the conference method, using all reference and resource data available.

The second purpose of the program is to inform, through the workshop method, field supervisors, superintendents, and foremen of the recognition, avoidance, and prevention of unsafe conditions and on the regulations applicable to his work environment.

The program is planned to educate and inform both management and labor. It is projected for two years to cover the entire state of Indiana. The CIAPA represents 5,000 state contractors.

Asbestos

ASBESTOS IS TOO IMPORTANT TO ECONOMY TO BE STOPPED, RESEARCH COUNCIL REPORTS

Asbestos is too important in the nation's technology and economy for its essential use to be stopped, a report issued by the National Academy of Sciences says.

The report was prepared for the Environmental Protection Agency by a special panel on asbestos and the Committee on Biologic Effects of Atmospheric Pollutants of the Division of Medical Sciences, National Research Council.

The report described various occupational diseases associated with heavy inhalation of asbestos fiber and considered the question of hazard to the general public from the tiny amounts of fiber that have been demonstrated to exist in ambient air.

Regarding fibrosis of the lung, the report states that "occupation-related asbestosis can be effectively controlled with air borne fiber concentrations much higher" than any the general public may be exposed to.

Cancer Concern

Concerning cancer, the report cited evidence that lung cancer associated with asbestos exposure will develop only among those workers with heavy and prolonged exposure, a situation not found among the general public.

Mesothelioma, a rare cancer of the lining of the lung and abdominal cavity, occasionally has been found among people living in proximity to uncontrolled asbestos plants and mines. However, the report comments that "there is no evidence that persons in the general population — without occupational, household, or neighborhood exposures — have any increased risk of neoplasm."

The report warns against extrapolating "from the mortality experience of those who are directly and indirectly exposed to asbestos in their employment to the general

public who have had moderate or slight exposure from ambient air." The report notes the difficulty in making such projections due to the lack of reliable data and suggests that there be more epidemiological studies, especially of populations in lower exposure ranges.

The report concludes "there is no evidence that the small number of fibers found in most members of the general population affect health or longevity." It recommends, however, that "major sources of man made asbestos emission into the atmosphere be defined and controlled." The report concluded that such controls are feasible.

Research

STUDY CONDUCTED ON CAUSES OF DEATH FOR 3,263 SAN FRANCISCO LONGSHOREMEN

Three hundred and fifty deaths from coronary heart disease were identified among 3,263 longshoremen in an 18-year follow-up after multiphasic screening examinations.

The findings were reported by Dr. Ralph S. Paffenbarger, Jr., Dr. Alfred S. Gima, Mary Elizabeth Laughlin, and Rebecca A. Black in an article, "Characteristics of Longshoremen Related to Fatal Coronary Heart Disease and Stroke," in the July issue of "The American Journal of Public Health."

The researchers identified 93 men who died from stroke among the 3,263 longshoremen, aged 35-64 years at the time of initial examination in 1951.

Cargo handlers sustained coronary death rates one quarter lower than men with less active jobs, expending fewer calories per work day. Differences in coronary mortality were greatest at younger ages and decreased steadily to disappearance at older ages.

Dividing the population into high and low-risk groups delineated four other characteristics associated with coronary mortality: pre-existing heart disease, systolic blood pressure above mean levels, cigarette smoking of one or more packs per day, and weight-for-height above mean levels. Risk of coronary mortality accompanying each characteristic was greater for less active individuals than for cargo handlers.

Men with less active jobs sustained stroke death rates similar to those of cargo handlers in the 18-year followup. Three other characteristics identified groups at high-risk of stroke mortality: pre-existing heart disease, systolic blood pressure above mean levels, and abnormal glucose metabolism.

Data suggest that physical activity influences the myocardium or its function more than the atherosclerotic process.

Industry

MINERAL INDUSTRY SURVEYS REVEAL RETROGRESSION IN INJURY FREQUENCY

Injury-frequency and severity rates for 1976 in mineral-extractive and processing industries retrogressed 5 and 7 percent respectively from 1969 data according to preliminary assessment of company reports by the Bureau of Mines.