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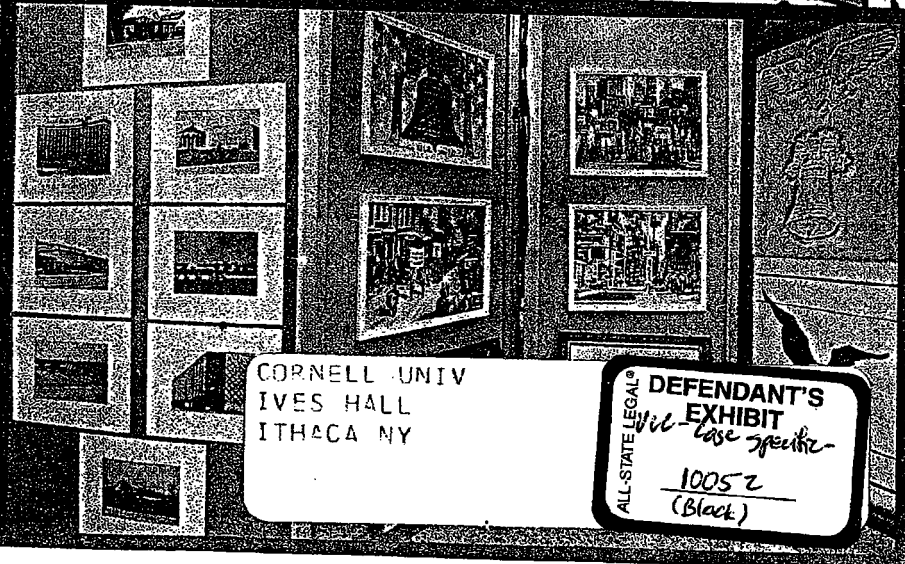
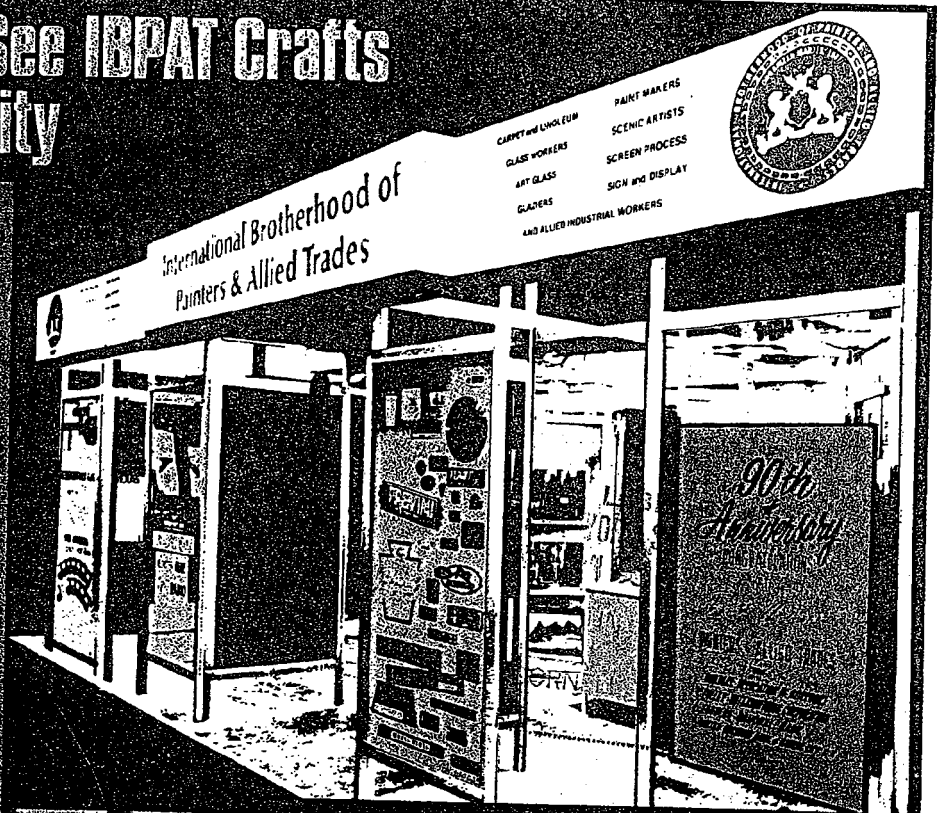
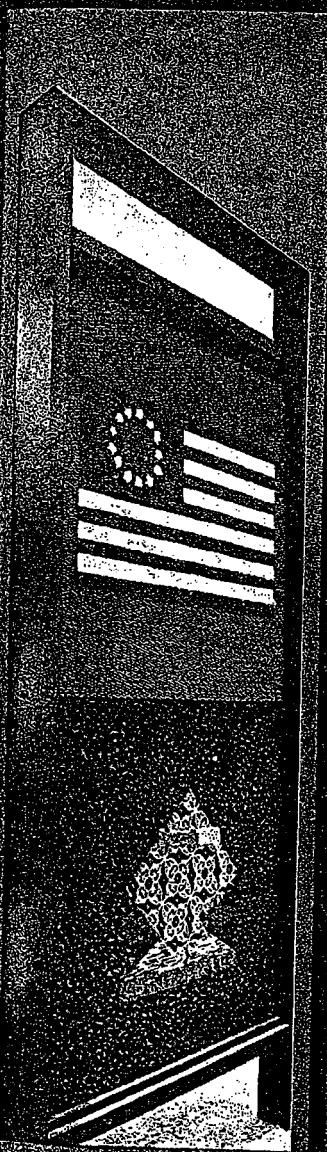
JUNE 1977

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Thousands See IBPAT Crafts in Kansas City



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Painters & Allied Trades Journal



On the Cover

IBPAT's 90th birthday
keynoted Brotherhood
exhibits at the 32nd
Union-Industries
Show.

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DEVOTED TO THE TRADE INTERESTS OF
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL •
INDUSTRIAL • SIGN • PICTORIAL •
COACH • AUTOMOBILE • AIRCRAFT •
MACHINERY • RAILWAY EQUIPMENT •
SHIP AND SCENIC PAINTING •
DECORATING • PAPERHANGING
WALL COVERING • DECORATIVE AND
ARCHITECTURAL GLASS WORK •
GLAZING • CARPET • LINOLEUM • SOFT
TILE • PAINT AND VARNISH MAKING
BRUSH MAKERS AND TO THE TRADE
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The following is a guide for IBPAT members exposed to dangerous benzene. Prepared by the U.S. Department of Labor, it should be kept handy for ready reference.

- If an employee experiences difficulty breathing, he or she should tell the employer.

- Impervious protective clothing (such as boots, gloves, sleeves, aprons, etc.) should be worn over any parts of the body that could be repeatedly exposed to benzene.

- A face shield should be worn if the employee's face or eyes could be splashed with liquid benzene.

- If benzene is splashed into an employee's eyes, he or she should wash it out immediately with large amounts of water. A doctor should be called as soon as possible.

- If benzene is spilled on clothing or skin, the contaminated clothing should be removed as soon as possible and the exposed skin should be washed with large amounts of water and soap immediately.

- If an employee breathes in large amounts of benzene, he or she should be exposed to fresh air at once. Artificial respiration should be applied only if breathing has stopped. A doctor should be called as soon as possible.

- If benzene is swallowed and the patient is conscious, vomiting should not be induced. A doctor should be called immediately.

- If an employee is exposed to benzene, the employer must provide within thirty days of the effective date of this standard, a medical history and laboratory tests. These tests must be provided without cost to the employee.

- Any employee is entitled to observe the benzene monitoring procedure. The employee also is entitled to receive an explanation of the measurement procedure, to observe the steps taken in the measurement procedure, and to record the results obtained.

- The employee or his or her representative is entitled to see records of measurements of the employee's exposure to benzene upon request. Medical examination records can be furnished to the employee's physician upon request to his or her employer.

- Benzene liquid is highly flammable. It should be stored in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area. All sources of ignition should be controlled. Non-sparking tools should be used when opening or closing benzene containers. Metal benzene containers should be grounded or bonded.

- Fire extinguishers, where provided, must be readily available and the employee should know where they are located and how to operate them. Smoking is prohibited in areas where benzene is used or stored. The employee should ask his or her supervisor where benzene is used in the work area and for additional plant safety rules.

The U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) announced plans in April to ban spackling and taping compounds containing asbestos or asbestiform talc.

Spackle and tape compounds containing asbestos have been shown by numerous researchers to cause cancer when inhaled. (See this month's "Ask the Doctor" column on page 10.) Asbestos in taping compounds also causes other respiratory diseases, discussed in the February JOURNAL's Part III of the MSSM study.

The taper is exposed to free asbestos when mixing taping compounds that are dry or when sanding them after application to fill a hole or mask a seam.

The CPSC says, "this banning action by the Commission follows regulatory actions previously taken by the EPA, OSHA and FDA that are intended to limit the exposure of the public in working and other situations."

Ask the Doctors

Do you worry about the chemicals with which you have to work? Do you have symptoms of an illness which may be connected to your occupation?

"Ask the Doctors" is the new JOURNAL feature designed to answer your questions about the hazards in the painting and allied trades.

This month, Dr. Edwin C. Holstein of New York's Mount Sinai School of Medicine discusses the dangers of asbestos.



Dr. Holstein has been with New York's Sinai School of Medicine since July of 1976. Before joining MSSM's staff, he was the Chief of Internal Medicine for the United States Air Force Hospital at Pease AFB in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Almost every day a story about asbestos can be found on TV and in the newspapers: asbestos discovered in school ceilings; asbestos found in the lungs of most city dwellers; asbestos found in crushed rock used to pave country roads; asbestos found in some wines from France; asbestos discovered in the drinking water of Duluth, Minn. Why is there so much concern about asbestos, and what importance does asbestos have for painters?

The importance to painters is that thousands of you have been exposed to asbestos every day in your work. It was, and in some

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Ask the Doctor: IBPAT Members Query the Experts

cases still is, found in drywall taping compounds, spackling compounds, wallboard, and floor tiles. It is used for insulation of pipes, furnaces, boilers, generators, walls and ceilings. It was often sprayed onto steel girders for insulation. In fact, asbestos has so many uses that it would be impossible to list them.

If the asbestos is left undisturbed, there is little danger. However, when a man saws wallboard, sands taping or spackling compound, rips out old plumbing, replaces an old ceiling, or drills into asbestos cement sheets, asbestos dust can be liberated into the air. Not only will the tapper or plumber breathe this dust, but so will all the other tradesmen working nearby. Therefore, you may have been exposed to asbestos, even if you have never worked with it yourself.

In general, if you have worked on a construction site, shipyard, powerhouse or factory which makes an asbestos product, you have probably been exposed to asbestos. If you have worked on the same job site with drywall taping, spackling, plumbing rip-out, ceiling rip-out, pipe covering, you have probably been exposed to asbestos.

What harm can asbestos do? The answer is: severe harm. It can cause several kinds of cancer, an one non-cancerous disease. The non-cancerous disease is called asbestosis. This consists of scarring of the lungs due to the presence of asbestos fibers. The most obvious symptom is shortness of breath that can slowly get worse, even if exposure to asbestos stops, since the fibers remain in the lung. In a few cases, asbestosis is fatal.

The cancers that asbestos can cause are cancer of the lung, stomach, colon and rectum. Asbestos workers who smoke have much

more lung cancer than other smokers. Asbestos workers who don't smoke have much less lung cancer than smokers. (In fact, asbestos workers who don't smoke have about the same amount of lung cancer as non-smokers in general.) Consequently, **asbestos workers must not smoke!**

If a man had his first asbestos exposure beginning last month, would he have one of these diseases today? No. In fact, he would be unlikely to show any signs of asbestosis until at least five or 10 years from initial exposure and he would be unlikely to contract any of the cancers until at least 20 years from now.

Here are some examples:

John Taper, who has always smoked cigars, has been doing drywall construction for 22 years. John almost certainly has been exposed to asbestos. In fact, even though he feels reasonably well (except for some short-windedness) there is almost a 50-50 chance that his x-ray would show some signs of lung scarring-asbestosis. In addition, he has a risk of getting cancer of the stomach, colon or rectum, or mesothelioma. However, his risk of getting lung cancer is no worse than the general public's, because he has never been a regular cigarette smoker.

Bill Brush worked as a general painter for six months in 1954 in a factory that grinds brake linings. He never did any grinding himself. In 1955, he robbed a New York bank and has lived on the French Riviera ever since, smoking one pack of cigarettes per day. Unfortunately, brake linings have a high asbestos content, which floats into the air when they are ground. Thus, Bill has a risk of developing all of

the diseases mentioned, including lung cancer (because he is a regular smoker), even through his exposure was only six months. The asbestos dust he inhaled in 1954 is still in his lungs!

Warren Dropcloth has been a painter of submarines for 14 years. He is not allowed to smoke on the job, but sneaks half a pack daily. He only wears his respirator when he uses epoxy. Warren has probably been exposed to asbestos because it was used throughout submarines for insulation. There is a good chance that his chest x-ray will show signs of asbestosis. Is he at risk for cancer? Not yet, because not enough time has gone by. But starting about six years from now (when he has reached 20 years since his first asbestos exposure) he will be at risk for all of the cancers mentioned.

There is one hopeful thing in all this. The more asbestos you inhale, the greater the risk. But, vice versa: the less you inhale the lower the risk. There is much that can be done to avoid exposure or minimize it; and the Brotherhood is working on such approaches.

All questions for "Ask the Doctor" should be directed to:

IBPAT Journal
c/o Robert Petersdorf
1750 New York Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

If writing about a personal illness, please include as much detail as possible: Present work? How long? Years in the paint trades? Usual work? What are your complaints? When did you notice them? If you have seen a doctor, what does he or she feel is wrong with you?