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ESTABLISHING FUNDS FOR LOCAL UNION HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

By BOB FOWLER

Many local unions have expressed an interest in developing an active and progressive health and safety committee. To date, their main constraint has been funding. All too many times they have been faced with going to the membership and asking for money to attend educational programs, purchase materials, equipment, or to sponsor medical screening programs. It is true that local union health and safety committees can expand into broad areas of activity. Most activities they desire to enter into are either precedent setting or not completely understood by the membership. The result could be a negative vote by the membership on the committee's funding request.

Some local unions have eliminated the need to constantly confront the membership with funding requests by submitting an annual budget to the executive board for approval and then on to the membership for final approval. The committee is then funded at a predetermined level for the fiscal year. The budget is usually broken down as to

Comparative Fund Raising: Per Capita vs Cents Per Hour*

Cents Per Hour	Monthly Income	Annual Income
1¢ per hr. per member	\$1733.00	\$20,796.00
2¢ per hr. per member	\$3466.00	\$41,592.00
<i>Per Capita</i>		
25¢ dues increase/per member	\$250.00	\$3,000.00
50¢ dues increase/per member	\$500.00	\$6,000.00

*—figures based on 1000 membership

anticipated expenditures for each separate cost item. That is, travel, office expenses, education, per-diem, materials, test equipment, consultation fees, medical surveillance, etc. Also, establishment of a special per-capita tax which is deposited in a separate account and mandated by local by-laws to be used specifically for funding the local's health and safety program, is another strategy.

Another approach is to negotiate with the employer for cents per hour per member to be deposited into a special account for the purpose of financing the local union health and

safety committee. This approach has been the most successful in the form of raising adequate funds because it is less taxing on the membership, and no dues increase is required. For example, a small amount of 1¢ per hour results in \$1.73 per member per month into the fund. This means a local with 100 members would have a continuing income of \$173.30 per month to operate their health and safety committee while a local with 1000 members would have \$1,733.00 per month.

The United Rubber Workers utilized this method in 1971. The union signed

Continued on next page

Criminal Charges in Death Of Three Workers

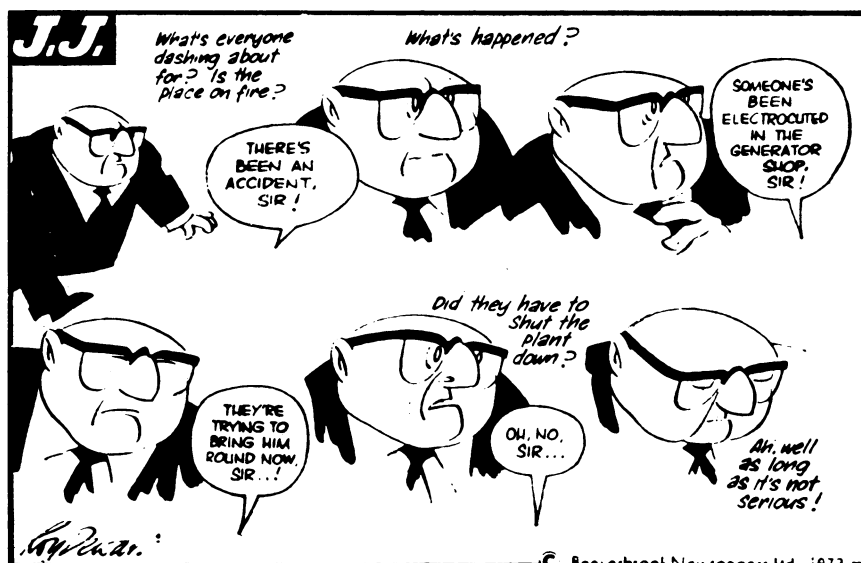
Five officials of the United States Borax and Chemical Corporation face jail and fines for their alleged failure to prevent two accidents that killed three men.

Kern County District Attorney Albert M. Leddy also filed charges against the company. If the officials are convicted, they could be jailed for six months and fined \$10,000 for each violation of the State Labor Code.

Both accidents occurred at the corporation's plant at Boron, California.

In one accident, an employee was killed when he was allowed to work with electrically charged machinery.

In the other, two employees were killed when, without safety equipment, they were sent to work in an area containing poison gas. —*Contra Costa Labor News*



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SAFETY COMMITTEES (Cont'd)

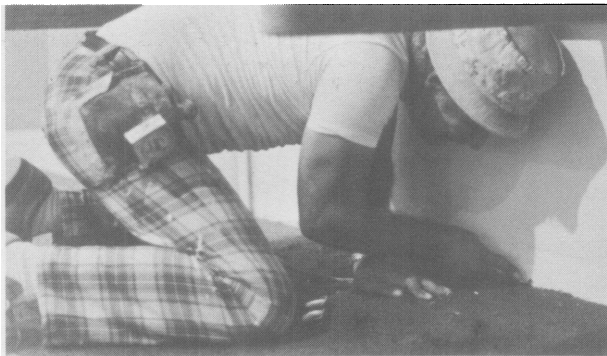
a five-year contract for ½ cent per hour per member to fund a Joint Occupational Health Program. The purpose of the program is to study the occupational health problems of rubber workers with the research being provided by two public health schools (Harvard and University of North

Carolina). The contract covers nearly 82,000 workers in 69 URW locals.

Using this latter method, during each new contract negotiations period, the local would have the option of negotiating additional cents per hour for this fund or fractions of a cent as appropriate. The membership would still maintain control over the fund expenditures

in the form of approving an annual budget and approval of their health and safety committee members. This control could be guaranteed through appropriate local union by-laws. As such activity by local unions increases, it is safe to predict the workplaces under union contract will become the most safe and healthful in existence.

LOHP LAUNCHES APPRENTICESHIP PROJECT



LOHP has been awarded a one-year performance contract by the U.S. Dept. of Labor for apprenticeship training in health and safety. The long-range goal of the project is to eventually conduct training sessions for all apprenticeable trades in the state.

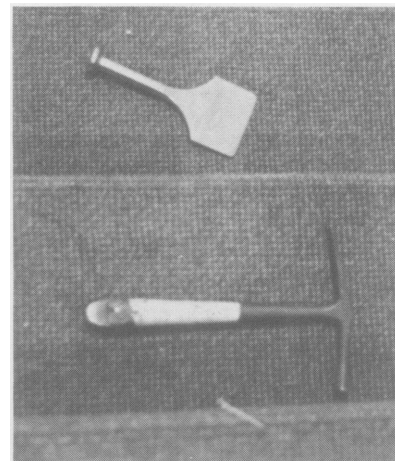
The idea of health and safety training for apprentices was devised by LOHP staff member Bob Fowler. He coordinated a pilot program for auto apprentices earlier this year (See Monitor, Vol. 2, No. 2), which pointed out the need and desire for health and safety training in apprentice's programs.

Under the one-year OSHA contract apprentices from two trades (one in building trades, one in metal trades), and instructors from the building trades group, will receive training in health and safety. Classroom instruction, on-the-job training, and a variety of visual aids will be used in the program.

Carpet, Linoleum and Soft Tile Setters will be the first group of apprentices trained. In addition to safety hazards which this group faces on the job, they are also exposed to a number of potentially toxic materials, such as adhesives, solvents and asbestos.

At the end of the training, apprentices should be able to recognize chemical and physical hazards as well as understand their effects on the human body. They should also become familiar with methods to control hazards and with how to resolve health and safety problems through collective bargaining.

The accompanying pictures show apprentice and journeymen Floor Coverers and some of the tools and materials they use on the job.

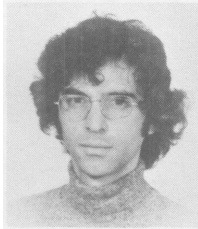


DOCTOR'S CORNER

Donald Whorton, M.D.

Dear Doc:

I work as an automobile mechanic in a large garage and have noticed frequent headaches in the afternoons, especially during cold weather. What do you think might be the problem?



Headaches are a common complaint that many people have regardless of their workplace. The reason for such headaches is difficult to determine; however, it is a common complaint associated with mild fatigue or tension. This is especially true if it occurs at the end of the workday. High blood pressure (hypertension) can also produce headaches and is often the first symptom that a person may have from the hypertension.

One important cause that is often overlooked is the effect of carbon monoxide. Although carbon monoxide poisoning is often associated with suicide or fire-related deaths, most instances of such exposures do not cause fatalities. Headaches may be the only noticeable effect. Automobile mechanics who work in enclosed spaces with motors running are undoubtedly exposed to carbon monoxide produced in the exhaust fumes. The only exception would be if your garage had a system in which the exhaust fumes were vented to the outside via some type of hose arrangement. The fact that you have worse or more frequent headaches during cold weather may be due to the practice of keeping doors and windows closed during cold weather to keep the warm air inside (which incidentally also keeps the carbon monoxide inside).

Headaches are a common complaint

after exposure to low levels of carbon monoxide. It is likely that the headaches you describe are due to exposure to a relatively low dose during the course of the work day. It is also possible that you may become dizzy or feel light-headed if you worked hard or tried to run.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that is produced from any type of incomplete combustion, such as occurs in automobile motors. Carbon monoxide combines with the oxygen-carrying compound of the blood in a way that reduces the blood's ability to carry oxygen. It can also kill a person if 50% of the blood is combined with the gas.

Space does not allow further discussion about all of the affects of carbon monoxide. (See *Monitor*, January 1975, for further information). But remember that a simple blood test taken at the end of the workday can determine

whether or not you are breathing too much carbon monoxide. Although not every laboratory can perform such a test, your doctor can easily have it sent to a laboratory which will be able to do it.

Requests for information on your work problems should be addressed to: Dr. Donald Whorton, LOHP Program, 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA 94720.

CLEARINGHOUSE

• The staff of the LOHP will conduct a 2½-day educational conference for local union health and safety committeepersons on Jan. 18-20, 1976. The conference format will include 6 two-hour workshops in addition to 3 two-hour general sessions with guest panelists from labor and government. The conference will be held at the Asilomar conference grounds in Pacific Grove, California. Registration fees are \$60.00 per person which includes rooms, meals and conference materials. Attendance will be limited to the first 180 prepaid registrants with a registration deadline of 12-15-75. Participants must be authorized health and safety committeepersons from local unions. All attendees will receive a certificate of completion. For further information, contact: Bob Fowler, LOHP, 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA 94720. Phone: (415) 642-5507.

• On October 1, 1975 a new publication was released by Ralph Nader's Health Research Group in Washington, D.C. The publication's title is: *Winning at the Occupational Health and Safety Review Commission—Workers' Handbook on Enforcing Safety and Health Standards*. The supervising author of the handbook was Mr. Bert Cottine, one of the foremost workers' rights attorneys in the U.S. LOHP recommends this publication be a part of all local union libraries. Your local may purchase a copy by sending \$5.00 to:

Health Research Group
2000 P St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: (202) 872-0320

HEALTH HAZARD ALERT

Chromate Pigments/Ethylene Dibromide Show Cancer Link

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has issued an alert on the possible cancer causing effects of chromate pigments and ethylene dibromide. The Dry Color Manufacturers' Association recently informed NIOSH of European studies suggesting that excessive exposure to dusts of lead chromate pigments, lead-molybdenum chromate pigments, and zinc chromate pigments may cause lung cancer.

The warning on ethylene dibromide stems from a National Cancer Institute announcement that preliminary test results show the substance is a potent carcinogen in laboratory animals. It appears to be related to stomach cancer.

—Job Safety and Health

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WORKERS AND HEALTH SPECIALISTS TOUR U.S.S.R.

The Soviet Union is well-known for having progressive occupational health standards for toxic chemicals. A group of 23 workers, union staff, industrial hygienists, and health specialists recently visited the U.S.S.R. to obtain first-hand information on Soviet methods for recognizing and controlling job health hazards. Three LOHP staff members—Morris Davis, Bob Fowler, and Andrea Hricko—went on the two-week tour, which was arranged through the cooperation of the All Union Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU) in Moscow.

During the whirlwind visit, the group visited Moscow, Leningrad, Baku (which is a large oil refining center on the Caspian Sea), and Yerevan, the capital of the Armenian Republic. In each city medical institutes, clinics or factories were prime points of interest. The Soviet Union is booming with new, high-rise construction and some tour members also visited some of these sites. In addition, meetings were held with the Labor

Protection Department of the AUCCTU and with the staff members from trade unions that represent metallurgical, educational, and textile workers.

Also visited was one of the six Labor Protection Institutes, whose research is funded by the Soviet trade unions. These were of special interest since nothing like them exists in the U.S. Each institute deals with hazards of a different industry. The one in Leningrad has 10 laboratories and a staff of 300 to study hazards in the radioelectronics and energy industries.

Future *Monitor* issues will contain analyses of tour members' observations about actual practices in Soviet factories and on construction sites. They will also compare U.S. and Soviet law and policies aimed at the prevention of occupational diseases. An effort will also be made to have tour members recollect what they observed at the Armenian cognac factory, where generous samples were offered for testing!

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