

Burning Battery Casings For Fuel Causes Death Of Child, 2 Narrowly Escape

A warning has been issued by pediatricians at Duke hospital against the burning of battery casings as fuel for heat or cooking, following the death of one child and the near death of two others from lead poisoning, brought about by fumes from the burning of casings.

A six-year old white Goldsboro child was admitted to Duke hospital recently in the last stages of severe convulsions. Despite every effort on the part of the hospital staff, he succumbed the same evening. Two weeks later a five-year old brother and a three-and-one-half-year old sister were brought to Duke with indications of the same type of poisoning. Careful questioning of the family brought out the following facts: The father of the children

Many Losing Their Benefits From Social Security

Many persons are losing their social security benefits, according to D. W. Lambert, manager of the Asheville office of the Social Security administration.

"The trouble", he explained, "lies in the fact that hundreds of persons have not bothered to come to one of our 465 field offices and ask about their rights, either as a retired worker age 65, or as a survivor of a deceased wage earner."

Payments under the old-age and survivors insurance law are never made until applied for. Applications must be made in person or by mail, and necessary forms must be completed. There is never any charge for advice or service, and there is no need to retain an attorney.

"We cannot over-emphasize", Mr. Lambert, continued, "the vital importance of every eligible retired worker over 65 and every widow or other nearest of kin of a worker who has died immediately contacting our nearest office for advice and assistance. This would also apply to survivors of World War II veterans who die within three years of the date of discharge."

As a concrete example, the manager described the case of a wage earner's widow with a small son, who lost over \$500 in survivors' monthly benefits

was a part time truck driver who also did some work for a local exterminating company. Near the family home is located a salvage company which reclaims the lead content from old automobile batteries. The father had been collecting the discarded battery casings from the salvage depot and had been carrying them home for use as fuel. During the latter months of last winter the casings had provided heat for the family of six. Last summer the casings provided fuel for cooking and in the last few weeks prior to the tragedy the casings had been burned in an open fireplace.

Battery casings provide good heat but give off a great deal of smoke. It is this smoke which contains poisonous lead fumes. The eldest child, who had a habit of sticking by the fire, was the first affected by the poison. Prior to coming to Duke he had fallen three times, lost and later regained the use of his right side, suffered severe headaches and become nauseous several times. He had been seen by a local doctor who referred him to Duke, following a night of severe convulsions. The child had been too long exposed to the poisonous fumes and died the same day he was admitted to the Duke pediatric service.

The other two children were admitted not long afterwards. They had suffered from occasional vomiting, loss of appetite, were listless, lost weight and wouldn't play. The boy was unable to follow directions and seemed confused. When the father realized that these two were exhibiting some of the symptoms which he recalled the oldest boy had shown earlier in his illness, he brought them to Durham where they were immediately admitted to Duke hospital.

The peculiarity of the case, which had involved three members of the same immediate family, led the doctors to suspect that there was some domestic situation responsible for the conditions. One of the first questions asked was "Do you burn battery casings in your home?" When this fact was affirmatively confirmed by X-rays indicating lead deposits at the growing end of the bones and the stippling of the red blood cells which showed up in laboratory tests and the source of the damage realized, messages were immediately dispatched to health authorities in Goldsboro to avoid a recurrence of the condition among others who might be using the casings for fuel.

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because she neglected to apply for them until a year and a half after her husband's death. Under the law, monthly benefits can begin no more than three months before the month in which the application is filed.

"Let every person who is employed in jobs covered by social security", the manager concluded, "remember this: There are two time for action under social security, first, when a worker reaches 65, and second, when a worker dies. The action in both cases is to immediately contact the nearest social security administration office."

"Persons who wish to discuss social security and cannot come to the field office should write us," Mr. Lambert said. "We have regular itinerate service in the counties of Western North Carolina, and will be glad to advise those who write on the next regular visit in their county. The local postmaster can also provide information in the future."

Pine Forests

In South Are Staging Come-back

A quarter century ago it was generally conceded that the Southern pine industry was headed for extinction.

So strong was this belief that many lumber operators moved out of the South and migrated westward because they thought the supply would be exhausted within a few years.

But nature — and common-sense planning—have changed all that, according to the Southern Pine association, which represents manufacturers of pine in 12 Southern states.

Today the production of lumber, and particularly pine, is not only one of the South's leading industries, but through good forestry practices and public education, it is rapidly becoming one of the most vital factors in the economic well-being of the South.

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