

Mercury content of cosmetics hit

WASHINGTON (AP) — Mercury is being used as a preservative in some cosmetics, say Food and Drug Administration officials, and should be replaced as quickly as possible with less toxic substances.

The officials voiced particular concern about skin lotions containing mercury, saying they pose "an appreciable hazard of poisoning for persons using the preparations daily on large areas of their bodies."

Only a relative handful of products contain mercury, and there are no reported cases of mercury poisoning linked to cosmetics. However, the symptoms of mercury poisoning mimic those of many other ailments, making it extremely hard to diagnose.

The findings and recommendations were disclosed in interviews with Dr. Virgil O. Wodicka, director of the FDA division that includes cosmetics, and Dr. Alfred Weissler, chief of the FDA cosmetics section.

The FDA was prompted to look for mercury in cosmetics after disclosures earlier this year that it was responsible for widespread environmental pollution. Mercury has been found in water, fish and game birds and has turned up in 33 states.

The substance is a long-lasting poison that is capable of doing particular damage to the brain and central nervous system, kidneys and liver.

The mercury disclosures have deepened concern among govern-

ment scientists about other possible health hazards associated with cosmetic use.

An unpublicized 1969 FDA study, for instance, found bacterial contamination in 20 per cent of 159 drug and cosmetic samples intended for skin use. The offending germ was classified as a possible infection agent in more than half of these cases.

But officials say they can do little about either mercury or germ contamination because the FDA lacks strong legislative authority to police the \$6-billion-a-year cosmetic industry.

Unlike drug makers, cosmetic manufacturers can market a product without first proving it safe. Ingredients need not be listed on the label. Market removals are mainly voluntary.

Officials of the Toilet Goods Association, a trade organization of cosmetic manufacturers, confirmed that mercury is used as a preservative in four of the 18 cosmetic classifications—creams and lotions, hair preparations, and facial makeup.

A spokesman for the association said he could not list brand names containing mercury or estimate the percentage that do contain it. But he described the proportion as small. FDA officials concurred, putting the number at about 40 among several thousand products. The trade association spokesman said manufacturers have begun removing mercury on the FDA's request.

Campus Briefs

A&M top Marine school in nation

A&M is the top Marine PLC school in the nation, members of the A&M chapter of the Semper Fidelis Society were informed Monday night.

Texas University is number two.

These were the 1970 rankings reported by Capt. R. E. Crane of Austin, Marine Corps Officer Selection Officer.

Crane, who is visiting the campus this week, said A&M currently has 43 students enrolled in the Platoon Leaders Class (PLC) Program, Marine Corps' primary commissioning program.

A&M in recent years ranked second in PLC enrollment to San Diego State but took over first place this year, the captain noted.

Crane, along with Capt. Gene Hughes and Sgt. Robert Stevens, is operating an information booth in the Memorial Student Center through Thursday.

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Oceanography project gets joint effort

The space oceanography project conducted by the College of Geosciences is being merged into the institution's new Remote Sensing Center.

Dr. John W. Rouse Jr., Remote Sensing Center director, said Dr. George L. Huebner, meteorology professor with the space oceanography project, will be associate director of the combined facility. The Remote Sensing Center is a joint program of Texas A&M's Colleges of Agriculture, Engineering, Geosciences and Science. It is administered through the university's Texas Engineering Experiment Station.

Remote sensing, Rouse explained, is a means for studying the earth from spacecraft or aircraft, using sophisticated sensors, such as multispectral photography, ultraviolet and infrared scanning devices, microwave and other detectors.

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Tectonophysics director to attend congress

Dr. John Handin, director of Texas A&M's Center for Tectonophysics, will be United States delegate to the Second International Congress of Rock Mechanics in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, Sept. 19-26.

The distinguished professor of

geology and geophysics is chairman of the U. S. National Committee for Rock Mechanics of the National Academies of Science and Engineering. He is representing the Council of the International Society for Rock Mechanics.

Dr. Handin serves as chairman of the Panel on Earthquake Modification and while in Europe will visit reservoirs in France, Greece and Switzerland.

He noted the filling of the reservoirs is known to have caused seismic activity in their vicinities.

During his Sept. 11 through Oct. 7 travels, Dr. Handin also will visit some of the world's leading rock mechanics laboratories in Karlsruhe, West Germany; Lisbon, Portugal, and London.

Students added

(Continued from page 1)

Committee's student seat was filled by Caperton. Dennis K. Chapman, Benjamin J. Crocker, and Paul Yates were appointed to the Sanitary & Student Health Services Board.

Positions for the Accident and Fire Prevention Committee were filled by Dennis K. Chapman, Michael M. Essmyer, Gordon Pulmer and Gerald Witkowski.

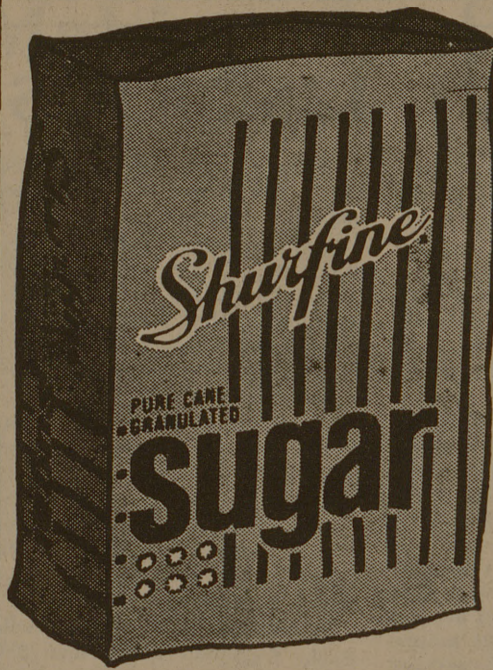
Thomas C. Bain, Caperton, Roger P. Miller, and Donald M. Olson were appointed to the Advisory Committee on Student Evaluation of Faculty.

Named to the Chapel Committee were David Smallwood, Morris K. Patterson, and John K. Hulse.

Donald E. Branson and William T. Hamilton were appointed to the Peace Corps Advisory Council.

Students named to serve on the Ring Committee were William E. Shepard, Douglas J. McGowan, and Nicholas J. Jiga.

Named to the Traffic Committee were Al L. Bradley, William M. Essmyer, Joe N. Kornegay, Lawrence D. McGill, David L. Moore, Roger P. Sindt, and Michael D. Smith. Student representatives were nominated by Caperton, then submitted to acting president Luedicke by Dean Hannigan and Caperton. Luedicke then presented the nominations to the Executive Committee, where they were reviewed and approved.



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