

country or to a house just outside town and its water supply are especially likely to be ignorant of the dangers of unsafe water supplies. Polluted water can look safe, smell safe and taste delicious and yet be as dangerous as a drink of poison. Just because the water bubbles from a spring or runs in a fairly swift current down the stream does not mean that it is safe.

Water can be made safe by boiling but many people do not like the taste of boiled water. Boiling the family water supply is something of a nuisance and there is always the danger that someone will carelessly or ignorantly drink the unboiled water. So, if you have your own family water supply, consult your health department and follow its advice.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH

## Public Needs Protection

**Public Health Service expert urges that new textiles should not be put on the market until they are tested for skin irritating properties.**

► WORKERS with textiles and the public using textiles should be protected from finishes which irritate the skin, Dr. Louis Schwartz, chief of the Dermatitis Investigations Section of the U. S. Public Health Service urged at the National Safety Congress meeting in Chicago.

Protection can be given the worker by mechanical devices, machines designed to keep the worker away from the chemical being applied, or impervious protective clothing, Dr. Schwartz pointed out.

The public which will use these textiles should be protected by having the new finishes tested for their skin-irritating properties before they are put on the market.

Several outbreaks of dermatitis have developed since the war began among workers sewing on a material on which water-proof finish was being used. In other instances workers sewing heavy water-proof duck developed dermatitis because the duck was finished without final washing and drying.

We now have crease-proof finishes, run-proof finishes, fire-proof finishes, mildew-proof finishes and a number of

others, the speaker pointed out. "The chemicals used for these finishes all have possibilities of causing dermatitis," Dr. Schwartz said.

The finish should be first tested on animals to determine if it is a primary skin irritant and thus avoid its use on fabrics coming in contact with the skin, he explained. If it passes this test successfully, patch tests should be performed with the finished fabrics on a number of individuals to find out how many cases of dermatitis develop. The same subjects would be re-tested ten days later to determine the skin sensitizing properties of the finish.

The safety record of men with serious physical handicaps is above average, Dr. H. A. Vonachen, medical director of the Caterpillar Tractor Company, told members of the Congress. They make good workers, and absenteeism is low. A survey has been conducted by the Caterpillar Tractor Company to find the jobs that the physically handicapped are capable of performing, so that men returning from service with handicaps may be employed immediately.

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The red blood cell powder is either dusted on the wound or applied with a sterile spatula. One or two applications are made daily and the wound covered after each with a dry, sterile dressing.

A five-inch-wide varicose ulcer, which almost encircled a patient's leg and had been present for eight years in spite of treatment by the usual accepted methods, was almost completely healed in eight weeks by daily application of the red blood cell powder.

The blood powder has also given good results in a number of wounds following surgical removal of pilonidal cysts and fistulas. Infected wounds, amputation stumps that were not healing, and open chest wounds are among other types treated.

The results are not uniformly beneficial. In three cases the powder caused such severe, irritating, burning pain that it had to be discontinued. The Mayo Clinic doctors believe, however, that further study of the use of the red blood cell powder is warranted. The possibility of using red cells from other than human blood, such as beef blood, so as to have a supply when the source of human blood cells drops off after the war, should also, they suggest, be investigated.

The use in wound treatment of red blood cells salvaged from plasma production was first suggested and tried by Dr. J. J. Moorhead and Dr. L. J. Unger, of New York City. These doctors used the cells in the form of a gelatin-like mass. Difficulty in keeping this semi-liquid material from being absorbed by the dressing or running out of the wound led to development, by Dr. A. E. Osterberg of the Mayo Clinic, of the red blood cell powder.

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## INDUSTRY

## Franklin Institute Awards Medal for Management

► THE VERMILYE MEDAL was awarded at the Franklin Institute to the president of the world's largest telephone system. "In recognition of outstanding contribution in the field of industrial management," the award was given to Walter S. Gifford, president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

The medal was awarded by William M. Vermilye, vice-president of the National City Bank of New York. Lewis H. Brown, president of Johns-Manville Corporation, was its first recipient in 1939.

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## MEDICINE

## Red Blood Cells Heal

**Infected wounds and unhealed amputation stumps are successfully treated with powder salvaged from plasma production.**

► SUCCESSFUL use of a blood powder from red blood cells, salvaged from plasma production, in speeding wound

healing is reported by Dr. T. H. Seldon and Dr. H. H. Young of the Mayo Clinic,