

PUBLIC HEALTH

Civil Defense Hospital

Austerity and efficiency keynote the Federal Civil Defense Administration's 200-bed, mobile improvised hospital for use at an attack or disaster scene.

► IF GLEAMING tile and chrome and a pretty nurse tightening snowy sheets over a thick mattress make up your picture of a hospital, you will not find it in the nation's newest one.

Nurses will be there, 20 of them plus 125 nurse's aides and assistants, and they may be pretty. But the only sheets they will have to straighten will be olive drab paper ones, and there will be no mattresses on the folding cot beds.

Austerity and efficiency keynote this new hospital. It was designed by the Federal Civil Defense Administration to provide part of the answer to what President Eisenhower has called the "awful arithmetic of the atomic bomb."

According to some of this arithmetic, a typical medium sized American city hit by a nominal sized atomic bomb would have only 6,639 usable hospital beds to care for 42,670 casualties needing hospital care and treatment in the first 24 hours after the bombing. That leaves 21,868 hospital beds to be improvised.

A hospital bed means more than just a bed or cot. It means blood or plasma or a substitute and a stand to hang the transfusion bottle on. It means sleep-inducing, pain-killing drugs, heart stimulants and antibiotics to fight infection. It means X-rays and plaster of paris for broken bones, and an operating table and surgical instruments and equipment for cleaning and sterilizing the instruments and surgical supplies. It means anesthetics and basins and bedpans and food.

All of this, except the food and kitchen equipment, in quantities large enough for 200 casualties, are provided in FCDA's new 200-bed, mobile improvised hospital. Enough expendable supplies are included for the first 36 to 48 hours of operation.

Armed Forces medical teams and their former patients will feel right at home in this hospital because it is modeled after the 60-bed Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, or MASH, which in Korea provided superior surgical care for non-transportable battle casualties as close as possible to the front lines. All equipment items are procured through the Armed Forces Medical Procurement Agency.

The total cost of the 200-bed hospital complete is \$26,435.47. It can be transported in a single van. It weighs about 12 and one-half tons, occupies 2,000 cubic feet and consists of about 450 packages, crates and bundles.

When assembled, it requires about 15,000 square feet of space. It is designed for location in a modern school or similar building of not more than two stories. It

can be set up in about four hours by about 30 professional and semi-trained auxiliaries, with untrained volunteers helping.

It is designed to provide, as close to the disaster area as possible, a haven for the desperately wounded where they can be given such physical comfort as possible and whatever lifesaving treatment they may need.

Three operating rooms, a central supply room, a pharmacy, an X-ray room and a clinical laboratory, a triage area, morgue, storage and office space plus 10 wards of 20 beds each make up the hospital.

Food, perhaps cooked in the school kitchen, is to be provided patients and staff by local civil defense welfare workers with their own supplies and equipment.

The staff, aside from the kitchen unit, would include 10 physicians and allied medical personnel, 20 professional nurses, 125 nurse's aides and similar auxiliaries, and 75 miscellaneous volunteer workers to serve as orderlies, etc.

As part of the federal emergency reserve

medical supplies, FCDA now has 200 of the new emergency hospitals on order. More than 90 more are on order for states and cities under the matching funds program in which the federal government pays half the cost.

The first assembled one is now being shown to medical and civil defense authorities in Washington. It may be opened to the public later.

Science News Letter, May 22, 1954

ORNITHOLOGY

Kentucky Warbler Has Specks and Sideburns

See Front Cover

► THE DIGNIFIED nesting bird shown on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER is a Kentucky warbler.

Both the male and the female wear gold-rimmed spectacles and long black sideburns. In addition to their striking facial markings, these wood warblers have beautiful olive-green feathers on the upper part of the body and rich yellow ones on the under side.

The song of the male, often heard all day long during the nesting season, is a loud clear whistled series of two notes that sound like tur-dle, tur-dle, tur-dle.

Once this song is heard and recognized, it can be used to identify this particular bird from its many wood warbler relatives.

Science News Letter, May 22, 1954



EMERGENCY CIVIL DEFENSE HOSPITAL—Dr. Marion Mills of the Federal Civil Defense Administration is shown helping to set up one of the wards in the new FCDA improvised hospital recently put on display. A single van can move the many different types of equipment included in the emergency set-up, which can be put in full operation in four hours after arrival at a disaster or attack scene.