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COLORADO WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

VOL. I

Nourishing meals—important to the mental and physical well being—are served thousands of undernourished school children by the Works Progress Administration of Colorado . . . another step in filling human needs.



NO. 4

NO COMPROMISE WITH UNSAFE PRACTICES

By Paul D. Shriver

State Administrator

Colorado Works Progress Administration

Accident prevention continues to hold an extremely important place in the operations of the Works Progress Administration in Colorado. This Administration is convinced that there is no justification or excuse for taking an unemployed man and then placing him in a position of hazard where even minor injury might result. In taking this position this Administration has only followed out the mandates which have been handed down to it from the President of the United States, Harry L. Hopkins, National Administrator, and the Safety Department of W. P. A.

In Executive Order No. 7046, under date of May 20, 1935, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States says:

"No person under the age of sixteen years, and no one whose age or physical condition is such as to make his employment dangerous to his health or safety, or to the health and safety of others may be employed on any work project. This paragraph shall not be construed to operate against the employment of physically handicapped persons, otherwise employable, where such persons may be safely assigned work which they can ably perform."

"All works projects shall be conducted in accordance with safe working conditions, and every effort shall be made for the prevention of accidents."

* * * *

Harry L. Hopkins, National Administrator, states as follows in the Handbook of Procedure, Chapter X, Section 12:

"The functions of the members of the safety organization shall be purely advisory except in case of an emergency, when in the absence of the project supervisor or upon the latter's refusal to follow recommendations they are required to stop the project until it is made safe."

On September 15, 1935, the State Administrator of Colorado issued the following instructions in

Safety Bulletin No. 1:

"When any supervisory person is found guilty, after a thorough investigation, of ignoring or disobeying any of the instructions as outlined in our safety bulletins for safeguarding the health and lives of WPA employees, thereby exposing the workers under their supervision to undue hazards, the person so guilty shall be immediately released of his supervisory position, regardless of whether or not an accident occurs."

This definite determination, which has been reflected practically throughout the entire structure of the work program, has resulted in the commendably low accident frequency rate which Colorado enjoys. The responsibility for accident prevention has been placed definitely upon the shoulders of the supervisory force with the help of a corps of trained field consultants so that there need be no excuse as far as technicalities are concerned. It is the established practice in case of serious accidents or fatalities where the supervisors are in any way at fault or where safety rules are knowingly disregarded to suspend immediately such supervisors until a thorough investigation is made, after which final action is taken.

It has been recognized from the beginning that accident prevention is a highly specialized, technical responsibility. Suggestions and criticism from employees has been welcomed and every effort has been made to secure for employees that full measure of safety which is so essential in this type of employment and which has been definitely ordered. As the work goes forward it is expected upon the part of both supervisors and project employees a conscientious continuation of these principles, and their violation will be dealt with in strict accordance with instructions. WPA workers must be *safe workers* and their supervisors must provide *safe working conditions*.