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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS  
DIVISION



JAN 30 1973

2 addressees

B-163375

Dear Mr. Sampson: 17

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The General Accounting Office is reviewing the occupational safety and health activities of Federal civilian agencies under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and Executive Order 11612, dated July 26, 1971. The review is being conducted pursuant to a request by the Chairman, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate. A summary report to the Committee will be prepared when our work is completed.

5:11:00

The act requires the head of each Federal agency to establish and maintain an effective and comprehensive occupational safety and health program consistent with the standards promulgated under the act by the Secretary of Labor. As part of the program, each agency is required to provide safe and healthful workplaces for its Federal employees.

Executive Order 11612 sets forth the criteria Federal agencies must follow in establishing a safety and health program. The criteria include a requirement for periodic inspections of workplaces to insure compliance with the standards. The Secretary of Labor sent copies of the act, Executive Order 11612, and the occupational safety and health standards which were published in the Federal Register on May 29, 1971, to heads of Federal departments and agencies on August 24, 1971.

To determine the extent of Federal agencies' compliance with the applicable standards, we employed an experienced safety engineer from private industry and acquired the services of an industrial hygienist from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Department of Labor, to inspect workplaces in Washington, D.C., at selected Federal agencies. These individuals are recognized experts in their respective fields.

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Among the workplaces inspected were those of the General Services Administration Region No. III building at 7th and D Streets, SW., and the Automobile Maintenance Facility at 1st and L Streets, SE. These workplaces were selected because they included an industrial operation, such as printing, and general office areas. These facilities were inspected on August 23, 1972. Personnel from the safety office of Region No. III accompanied our representatives. Except that the inspections were limited to selected areas and activities, the inspections were conducted in a manner similar to an OSHA inspection in private business workplaces.

Observations noted during our inspection are presented in the enclosure to this report. We found many instances of noncompliance with OSHA standards, relating to mechanical, electrical, fire, housekeeping, and other hazards in the workplaces. Some of the instances of noncompliance were severe enough that, had they been found in private businesses, the businesses would have been subject to monetary penalties. Other instances of noncompliance noted were less severe.

Our observations, noted in the enclosure, were discussed informally with agency safety officials during a meeting on August 31, 1972. It was generally agreed that corrective action was needed. This report is to provide you with our findings formally and in sufficient detail to insure that appropriate corrective action has been or will be taken to comply with the intent of the act and Executive order.

Copies of this report are being sent today to the Director, Office of Management and Budget, and to the Secretary of Labor.

Because of congressional interest in federally sponsored occupational safety and health programs, we are also providing  
C1 copies to the Chairman, Senate Committee on Labor and Public  
C2 Welfare; the Chairman, Select Subcommittee on Labor, House  
Committee on Education and Labor; the Chairman, Subcommittee  
C3 on Environmental Problems Affecting Small Business, House

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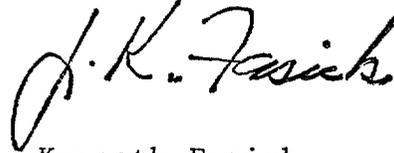
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Select Small Business Committee; and Representative William A. Steiger.

TNT 01300

We wish to acknowledge the cooperation given our representatives during the review and inspection. We would appreciate being informed of any further actions taken on matters discussed in this report.

Sincerely yours,



J. Kenneth Fasick  
Director

Enclosure

The Honorable A. F. Sampson,  
Acting Administrator,  
General Services Administration

17

OBSERVATIONS RELATING TO COMPLIANCE WITH  
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS  
NOTED DURING INSPECTIONS ON AUGUST 23, 1972, AT  
WORKPLACES OF THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION-REGION III

<u>Safety engineer observations</u>	OSHA standard ( <u>note a</u> )
PRINTING AND PUBLISHING WORKPLACES AT 7th AND D STREETS, SW.:	
Handpowered papercutters did not have proper guards for the blades.	1910.212(a)(3)(ii)
A number of pieces of fixed and portable machinery were not grounded to prevent electrical shock.	1910.314(d)
There were no eyewash facilities for immediate attention in the event of a splash from handling or mixing acids.	1910.94(d)(9)(vii)
A number of cooling fans did not have proper blade guards.	1910.212(a)(5)
A number of electrical receptacles did not have faceplates.	1910.315(n)(4)
Compressed air used for cleaning purposes exceeded 30 pounds per square inch.	1910.242(b)
The stitcher machines did not have face shields to prevent injury in case of wire breakage.	1910.132(a)
Portable air compressors and fixed compressors did not have guards on the drivebelts.	1910.219(e)(1)(i)
Employees were permitted to eat in areas where toxic substances were present.	1910.141(g)(3)
Bench grinders were not equipped with tool rests to prevent material being ground from slipping and injuring employees.	1910.215(a)(4)
Bench grinders were not equipped with eye shields.	1910.132(a)
A drum of isopropyl alcohol was not grounded to prevent fire.	1910.106(e)(6)(ii)

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard  
(note a)

Flammable solvents were not stored in safety cans.

1910.106(e)(2)(ii)

BASEMENT WORKPLACES AT  
7th AND D STREETS, SW.:

## General observation:

Fire extinguishers throughout the area were not being periodically inspected and in many instances were not identified or accessible.

1910.157(d)

## Plumbing shop:

Compressed gas bottles were not properly secured to prevent their falling or discharging their contents, possibly injuring employees. Compressed air used for cleaning purposes exceeded 30 pounds per square inch.

1910.252(a)(2)(ii)

1910.242(b)

A handpowered papercutter did not have a proper guard for its blade.

1910.212(a)(3)(ii)

## Construction area:

Two stepladders in this area did not have the broken shelves repaired to prevent tool or material droppage.

1910.25(d)(1)(i)

## Elevator shop:

Fluorescent light fixtures did not have guards for the tubes.

1910.324(i)(1)(ii)

The engine lathe did not have a guard on its drivebelt.

1910.219(e)(1)(i)

A handpowered papercutter did not have a guard for its blade.

1910.212(a)(3)(ii)

A number of cooling fans did not have proper blade guards.

1910.212(a)(5)

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard  
(note a)

A number of electrical receptacles  
did not have faceplates.

1910.315(n)(4)

## Paint shop:

Compressed air used for cleaning  
purposes exceeded 30 pounds per  
square inch.

1910.242(b)

Fluorescent light fixtures did not  
have guards for the tubes.

1910.324(i)(1)(ii)

A cooling fan did not have a  
proper blade guard.

1910.212(a)(5)

## Carpenter shop:

Fluorescent light fixtures did not  
have guards for the tubes.

1910.324(i)(1)(ii)

Compressed air used for cleaning  
purposes exceeded 30 pounds per  
square inch.

1910.242(b)

## Compressor room:

One air compressor did not have  
guards on the flywheel or  
drivebelt.

1910.219(e)(1)(i)

A water cooler in this area was  
not grounded to prevent electrical  
shock.

1910.314(d)(4)(iii)

## Electric shop:

Compressed air used for cleaning  
purposes exceeded 30 pounds per  
square inch.

1910.242(b)

MOTOR POOL WORKPLACES AT  
1st AND L STREETS, SE.:

A number of electrical receptacles  
did not have faceplates.

1910.315(n)(4)

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard  
(note a)

A large number of cooling fans did not have proper blade guards.	1910.212(a)(5)
Compressed gas bottles throughout the area were not properly secured to prevent their falling or discharging contents, possibly injuring employees.	1910.252(a)(2)(ii)
Bench grinders were not equipped with tool rests to prevent material being ground from slipping and possibly injuring employees.	1910.215(a)(4)
Bench grinders were not equipped with eye shields.	1910.132(a)
A portable air compressor did not have guards on its drivebelts.	1910.219(e)(1)(i)
A vertical steel ladder in this building extended beyond 20 feet without a protective cage to prevent employees from falling.	1910.27(d)(1)(ii)

OSHA standard  
(note a)

Industrial hygienist observations

PRINTING AND PUBLISHING WORKPLACES  
AT 7th AND D STREETS, SW.:

Mechanical equipment room:

Sound-level readings of 88 to 98 decibels were measured at various work locations around the compressors. 1910.95

Computer room:

Sound-level readings of 95 decibels were measured around various computers and a 92-decibel reading was measured at the reading machine. 1910.95

Carpenter shop:

Sound-level readings of 93 and 101 decibels were measured at the wood planer and Dewalt circular saw, respectively. 1910.95

Printing shop:

A sound level of 95 decibels was measured at the folder machine. 1910.95  
Grease and oil, which could cause slipping, was found on the floor near the papercutter. 1910.22(a)

Camera room:

Plastic filmstrips on the floor presented a slipping hazard. 1910.22(a)

Dark room:

The floor in the dark room was not clean, thus exposing employees to a tripping or slipping hazard. 1910.22(a)

Industrial hygienist observationsOSHA standard  
(note a)

Suitable eyewash facilities were not provided for immediate attention in the event of a splash from handling or mixing acids.

1910.94(d)(9)(vii)

## Plate making room:

The air flow velocity under the canopy-type hood was negligible and may not be sufficient to effectively control organic vapors.

1910.93

## Photocopy room:

The solvent used in blanket photo-wash No. 2 was not properly identified and labeled, and there was no exhaust to effectively control organic vapors.

1910.93

## Offset presses:

Employees may be exposed to isopropanol while the presses are operating.

1910.93

## Plumbing shop:

The canopy hood over the welding table had a very low air flow velocity.

1910.93

## Paint shop:

The fire sprinkler system installed in the paint shop does not extend to the paint storage room.

1910.106(d)(7)(b)(1)

## Dark room:

Although no air samples were taken in this room an odor of acetic acid

Industrial hygienist observations

OSHA standard  
(note a)

was detected and sufficient room  
air changes per hour may not be  
taking place.

1910.93

MOTOR POOL WORKPLACES  
AT 1st AND L STREETS, SE.:

Automobile maintenance  
facility:

Flexible ducts with suitable  
adapters were not connected to  
the overhead exhaust system for  
removing automobile engine exhaust  
gases.

1910.93

<sup>a</sup>Standards cited refer to Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations,  
Part 1910--Occupational Safety and Health Standards.

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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS  
DIVISION

FEB 28 1973

B-163375

The Honorable Leonard T. Golden  
Acting Public Printer  
Government Printing Office

Dear Mr. Golden:

The General Accounting Office is reviewing the occupational safety and health activities of Federal civilian agencies under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and Executive Order 11612, dated July 26, 1971. The review is being conducted pursuant to a request by the Chairman, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate. A summary report to the Committee will be prepared when our work is completed.

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Executive Order 11612 sets forth the criteria Federal agencies must follow in establishing a safety and health program. The criteria include a requirement for periodic inspections of workplaces to insure compliance with the standards. The Secretary of Labor sent copies of the act, Executive Order 11612, and the occupational safety and health standards which were published in the Federal Register on May 29, 1971, to heads of Federal departments and agencies on August 24, 1971.

To determine the extent of Federal agencies' compliance with the applicable standards, we employed an experienced safety engineer from private industry and acquired the services of an industrial hygienist from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Department of Labor, to

B-163375

inspect workplaces in Washington, D.C., at selected Federal agencies. These individuals are recognized experts in their respective fields.

Among the workplaces selected for inspection were facilities of the Government Printing Office at North Capital and H Streets, NW. The Government Printing Office's workplaces were selected because of their industrial operations. These facilities were inspected on August 28 and 29, 1972. Safety and other officials of the Government Printing Office accompanied our representatives. Except that the inspections were limited to selected areas and activities, the inspections were conducted in a manner similar to an OSHA inspection in private business workplaces.

Observations noted during our inspection are presented in the enclosure to this report. We found many instances of noncompliance with OSHA standards, relating to mechanical, electrical, fire, housekeeping, and other hazards in the workplace. Some of the instances of noncompliance were severe enough that, had they been found in private businesses, the businesses would have been subject to monetary penalties. Other instances of noncompliance were less severe.

Our observations, noted in the enclosure, were discussed informally with agency officials during a meeting on August 30, 1972. It was generally agreed that corrective action was needed. This report is to provide you with our findings formally and in sufficient detail to insure that appropriate corrective action has been or will be taken to comply with the intent of the act and Executive order.

Copies of this report are being sent today to the Director, Office of Management and Budget, and to the Secretary of Labor.

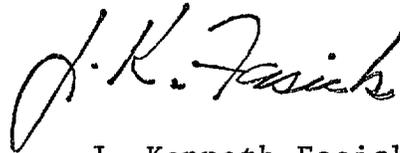
Because of congressional interest in federally sponsored occupational safety and health programs, we are also providing copies to the Chairman, Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare; the Chairman, Select Subcommittee on Labor, House Committee on Education and Labor; the Chairman, Subcommittee on Environmental Problems Affecting Small Business, House

B-163375

CS Select Small Business Committee; and Representative William A. Steiger. In addition, we are providing a copy to the Chairman, Joint Committee on Printing. TMT 213

We wish to acknowledge the cooperation given our representatives during the review and inspection. We would appreciate being informed of any further actions taken on matters discussed in this report.

Sincerely yours,



J. Kenneth Fasick  
Director

Enclosure

OBSERVATIONS RELATING TO COMPLIANCE WITH  
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS  
NOTED DURING INSPECTIONS ON AUGUST 28 AND 29, 1972, AT  
WORKPLACES OF THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

Safety engineer observations

OSHA standard  
(note a)

General observations on facilities:

In many cases, access to the fire extinguishers was blocked by an accumulation of material; stock; or, in some cases, rubbish.

1910.22(b)

1910.157(a)(2)

There was no indication that fire extinguishers had been inspected monthly.

1910.157(d)(2)(i)

There was no indication that periodic hydrostatic tests on the fire extinguishers had been performed.

1910.157(d)(4)(iii)

Food was being stored, prepared, and eaten in many departments where it was subject to toxic fumes.

1910.141(g)

The proper color coding for the sprinkler cutoff valves was observed nowhere in the entire facility.

1910.144(a)(1)(k)

The proper color coding on safety cans used for storing flammable or combustible liquids was not being used.

1910.144(a)(1)(ii)

The aisle markings were generally good; however, passageways between buildings were used as storage areas, prohibiting a clear and easy exit in an emergency. Stairways and landings, which should be kept absolutely clear, in many instances had boxes of civil defense equipment and rubbish containers blocking passage.

1910.37

Containers of solvents prepared for shipment to other agencies were unmarked or improperly marked. Handlers and ultimate users would accordingly not be aware of the hazards involved in using these various liquids. Refer to the Federal Hazardous Substances Labeling Act (15 USC 1261).

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard

## Proof room:

There were no exit signs.  
A number of cooling fans did not have proper guards for their blades.

1910.37(q)(1)

1910.212(a)(5)

## Copper etching room:

No face shields and eyewash fountains were available to protect employees working with concentrated acids.  
A number of electrical receptacles did not have faceplates.

1910.94(d)(9)(vii)

1910.315(n)(4)

## Photo engraving--router room:

A bench grinder was not equipped with a tool rest to prevent the material being ground from slipping and possibly injuring employees.

1910.215(a)(4)

A bench grinder was not equipped with a protective eyeshield.

1910.132(a)

The drivebelts on three routers were not properly guarded.

1910.219(e)(1)(i)

A table saw, used for cutting blocks, did not have a safety guard.

1910.213(d)(1)

## Etching room:

There were no eyewash facilities for immediate attention in the event of splash from handling acid.

1910.94(d)(9)(vii)

A drum of flammable solvent was not grounded to prevent fire.

1910.106(e)(6)(ii)

The etching machine did not have a guard for its drivebelt.

1910.219(e)(1)(i)

## Monotype casting department:

Compressed air used for cleaning purposes exceeded 30 pounds per square inch.

1910.242(b)

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard

A bench grinder was not equipped with a tool rest to prevent the material being ground from slipping and possibly injuring employees.	1910.215(a)(4)
Many of the monocasters did not have a guard for the flywheel, idler wheel, or drivebelt.	1910.219(e)(1)(i)
Proper safety precautions were not being taken when adjustments were being made on the exposed hot lead pots. These pots swing out into the aisle and it is not readily apparent that they contain molten metal. There were no temporary barriers or guards around these machines to prevent employees from inadvertently walking into them. There were indications that the ventilating system duct work contained a large quantity of oil and dust, which is a serious hazard.	1910.22(a)
	1910.22(a)
Stereotype room:	
Side guards on the bench grinder were missing.	1910.215(a)
Flammable solvents were not being stored in a safety cabinet.	1910.106(e) 1 or 2
Hand section composing room:	
Safety cans were not provided for storing solvents.	1910.106(d)(2)(i)
Skids in this area were not laid flat and properly secured to prevent their falling and injuring employees.	1910.22(a)
Many ladders were deteriorating and appeared unsafe for use because of a lack of proper maintenance.	1910.25(d)
One sprinkler cutoff valve could not be reached because a ladder was not available.	1910.159

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard

Employees were using dollies as scooters. While this is an easy method of moving the dollies, the dollies are heavy and can cause serious injury if they run into someone.

1910.22(a)

## Documents department:

There was a broken electrical receptacle near door A636.

1910.315(n)(4)

Fluorescent lights did not have guards for the tubes.

1910.324(i)(1)(ii)

An electrical receptacle did not have a faceplate.

1910.315(n)(4)

Safety cans were not provided for the disposal of cleaning rags.

1910.106(e)(9)(iii)

Addressograph machines #202 and #7348 did not have proper safety guards.

1910.219(e)(1)

## Public documents department:

The addressograph machines did not have safety guards to prevent injury to employees.

1910.219(e)(1)

## Material management public documents:

The mezzanine did not have a toeboard to prevent tools from dropping and possibly injuring employees.

1910.23(c)

## Public documents depository unit:

Hazardous working conditions were resulting from rubbish and other material on the floor.

1910.22(a)

A face shield was not provided for the individual cutting the shipping straps.

1910.132(a)

## Patent section:

A vertical ladder was mounted too close to a wall, thus creating an unsafe condition for employees using it.

1910.27(c)

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard

Standard handrails and toeboards were not provided to prevent tools or other material from falling.

1910.23(c)

Fire exits were obstructed.

1910.37(k)

The bridgeways between buildings #2 and #3 on both the 4th and 5th floors were badly congested.

1910.37(k)

Exits were not properly marked.

1910.37(q)

## Pamphlet section of folding room:

The Lawson guillotine cutter #4905 had the safety control blocked with a wedge, a serious safety violation.

1910.212(a)(3)(ii)

## Letter press section:

Vertical ladders did not have protective cages to prevent employees from falling.

1910.27(d)(1)(i)

Standard handrails and toeboards to prevent tool droppage were not provided for the mezzanine.

1910.23(c)

Much material and rubbish existed around press machine #1, thus creating hazardous working conditions.

1910.22(a)

The Embossing Press #1736 did not have a guard at the point of operation.

1910.212(a)(3)(ii)

The number of Miehle Presses pose a serious problem because of the great number of pinch points. To provide adequate safety guards for these machines while maintaining production would almost be physically impossible. Keeping the area around these presses clear and free of obstructions so that men can move around the presses would reduce some hazards.

1910.212(a)

## Pamphlet bindery:

The sprocket and chain on gatherer machine #1509 was not guarded.

1910.219(f)(3)

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard

The 3 knife trimmer machine #4429 did not have a two hand positive safety control action.	1910.212(a)(3)(ii)
Box stapler #2500 was not equipped with a face shield.	1910.132(a)
 Machine shop:	
Waste rags were not being disposed of in covered metal receptacles.	1910.106(e)(9)(iii)
Compressed air used for cleaning purposes exceeded 30 pounds per square inch.	1910.242(b)
 Electric shop:	
The slings, both wire and manila, appeared to be in need of repair and were not hung so that they could be readily examined.	1518.251(b and c)
The grinding stand was not equipped with an eye shield.	1910.132(a)
The grinding stand was not equipped with a tool rest to prevent the material being ground from slipping and possibly injuring employees.	1910.215(a)(4)
 Carpenter shop:	
The bench grinders were not equipped with eye shields.	1910.132(a)
Bench grinders were not equipped with tool rests to prevent the material being ground from slipping and possibly injuring employees.	1910.215(a)(4)
 Offset press department:	
The safety guards were out of position on both web presses.	1910.212(a)(3)(ii)
Heavy accumulations of oil and oil-soaked paper scraps were found under the offset presses.	1910.22(a)

Safety engineer observationsOSHA standard

The carbon dioxide extinguishing system provided for these presses in event of fire did not appear to have been checked recently.

1910.161

A Harris Press operator was apparently using an air line for cleaning purposes with pressure in excess of 30 pounds per square inch. He was blowing paper dust, grease, and oil onto adjoining presses. Vacuum cleaners could be used to pick up most of this material.

1910.242(b)

There was a broken cable on the paper holder on the Harris Press #1208, exposing employees to possible injury by the paper slipping.

1910.212(a)

The coupling on machine #1806 did not have a safety guard.

1910.219(h)

## Delivery platform:

There was an accumulation of oil on the floor. Apparently the machinery on the floor above was leaking so badly that the oil had come through the concrete ceiling onto the floor, presenting a serious slipping hazard.

1910.22(a)

## Bailing room:

Compressed air used for cleaning purposes exceeded 30 pounds per square inch.

1910.242(b)

Industrial hygienist observationsOSHA standard

## Blocking room C709:

Sound levels as high as 103 decibels were measured at the circular metal saw and 90 decibels were measured near the dust collector.

1910.95

## Laboratory B518:

The air flow velocity was not sufficient to effectively control organic vapors for three chemical bench hoods where organic solvents, such as benzene, ether, chlorinated hydrocarbons, and mineral acids, are handled.

1910.93

## Plating room, second floor:

Excessive ozone concentrations of 0.5 parts per million and 0.7 parts per million were measured. An exhaust fan which had been installed was not operating at the time of our inspection. Use of mercury vapor lamps instead of arc lamps would reduce this problem.

1910.93

## Fountain solution make-up room C-263:

Containers of ammonium hydroxide and mineral acids were not kept apart, as required.

1910.177(c)(3)

The pathway was not clear leading to the emergency eyewash facility.

1910.22(a)

## Heat set web press room:

Sound levels of between 90 and 96 decibels were measured near the presses.

1910.95

## Dark rooms:

There were no eyewash facilities provided for immediate attention in the

<u>Industrial hygienist observations</u>	<u>OSHA standard</u>
event of a splash of acid in four dark rooms on the eighth floor.	1910.94(d)(9)(vii)
Letter press room, fourth floor, bldg. no. 3:	
A sound level of 92 decibels was measured at the Miller and Miehle letter presses.	1910.95
Binder book addition room:	
Sound levels of between 90 and 92 decibels were measured at a work station near two three-way paper trimming machines.	1910.95
Main linotype and monotype rooms:	
Hazardous working conditions resulted from the generally poor housekeeping with metal type scattered on the floor.	1910.22(a)
Monotype room:	
Sound levels of between 93 and 96 decibels were measured at various work stations.	1910.95
Blocking room:	
A health hazard may exist on days when large amounts of glue containing methyl ethyl ketone are used.	1910.93
Press room area 2B14 and 2B15:	
Up to 400 parts per million of isopropanol was measured around Crabtree Press #2272.	1910.93
Although this was at the unsafe level at the time of the inspection, it could be higher when more of the presses are operating.	1910.93

<u>Industrial hygienist observations</u>	<u>OSHA standard</u>
A sound level of 88 decibels was measured at the Crabtree Press #2272. Only four of twelve presses were operating at the time of our inspection and sound levels could exceed standards when most or all of the presses are operating.	1910.95
 Room C704:	
There may be an ozone contamination.	1910.93
 Dark rooms, eighth floor:	
Air tests showed 5 to 10 parts per million of acetic acid in three of the four dark rooms.	1910.93
 Binder area:	
A noise problem may exist after the binder machine is operated for a period of time.	1910.95
 Monotype room:	
Exhaust ducts were broken and needed repair. Exhaust system needed cleaning.	1910.93
 Linotype machines:	
Employees may be exposed to lead dust while linotype machines are being cleaned with a whirley brush.	1910.93
 Record press section:	
Although this area was not monitored, it appears that employees may be exposed to ink mist and paper dust.	1910.93