

Accidents Are Not Inevitable Experts on Subject Emphasize

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Motor vehicle accidents were responsible for about 1,500,000 injuries and some 38,000 deaths in the United States during 1960, according to the statisticians of a leading insurance company. As a matter of fact, motor vehicle accidents are the largest single cause of fatal injuries among both males and females at every age period under 65 years.

Even though efforts to educate the public in safe driving practices have met with considerable success in recent years, there is still much to be done before the highways and byways become safe to travel.

ACCIDENTS are not inevitable, say experts on the subject of safe driving, who are of the opinion that driving can be just as safe as the individual driver wants to make it. Unfortunately, it requires teamwork. Drivers with good safety record are often jeopardized by those who are careless or reckless.

To find out more about the causes of reckless driving, the U.S. Public Health Service embarked on a study of more than 20,000 motorists in March of this year in order to determine the relationship between human behavior and driving records.

THIS RESEARCH is to be divided into three major categories and includes physical factors such as heart disease, poor vision, bad hearing, and other conditions; physiological factors including the effects of alcohol, antihistamines, smoking, and fatigue on the driver; and psychological factors or the part that emotions such as anger, frustration, or over-aggressiveness play in the driver's attitude.

This two-year study of reckless driving, it is hoped, will provide a gauge whereby public education on safe driving may be made more effective and prove to be a sort of "vaccine" against reckless or careless driving.

MEANTIME, it is generally conceded that the majority of motor vehicle accidents can be traced to three primary causes; namely, the drinking of alcoholic beverages, faulty vehicles, and the driver's physical condition.

It is estimated that as many

as 50 per cent of the drivers or pedestrians killed each year had been drinking prior to the fatal accident. Alcohol and gasoline simply do not mix well.

What is less widely recognized is that a faulty condition in a car can cause an accident that no amount of safe driving will prevent. Cars should be checked periodically at a reputable garage and always before any long trip is undertaken. A check-up of this type should include an examination

of wheel alignment, brakes, headlight adjustment, steering assembly, shock absorbers, proper tire pressure, and mufflers.

THE MUFFLER, especially, is a commonly overlooked hazard. The exhaust of a car is 5 to 15 per cent carbon monoxide, yet as little as an .02 concentration of this gas in the air can be lethal if inhaled over a period of time. Even exceedingly small amounts from a leaking exhaust system will cause sleepiness and mental confusion, and there is no doubt that an appreciable though unknown number of fatal accidents occur from this cause every year

—many of them probably blamed on fatigue.

There are also a number of individuals whose vision seems quite normal but whose depth perception, resistance to glare, and peripheral vision are dangerously below par, conditions which make driving a hazard. Fatigue, hurry, daydreaming, and impatience are also factors that increase the likelihood of accidents.

IN SPITE OF the fact that seat belts reduce injuries in car accidents from about 35 to 60 per cent, only three per cent of cars involved in accidents were equipped with one or more, according to a survey made by the California High-

way Patrol in 1958. Yet evaluation of some 30,000 cars involved in accidents revealed that being thrown from a car is the second most frequent cause of injury, while being thrown against the steering assembly ranks first.

The National Safety Council states that the death rate in motor vehicle accidents per vehicle miles traveled is presently at an all-time low. Nevertheless there seems to be plenty of room for improvement.

A pamphlet on safe driving will be mailed to anyone who requests it from Health Education, L. A. County Health Dept., 241 N. Figueroa St., Los Angeles 12.

DECEMBER 14, 1961

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IN THE FIELD of science, there are natural science kits more fun than anybody ever dreamed. When one of these kits is put together, the youngster has constructed and learned the life span of a chicken from the fertilized egg to the baby chick.

Each of the seven stages in the development of the chick comes with its own transparent shell and is a separate construction project. The "chicken" can be taken apart and can be reconstructed for permanent study and display. It is said to answer all questions about how a chicken is born, except "which came first."

48 Saxons Clerking In Stores

Forty-eight North High School students have been released from school one week prior to Christmas vacation to gain work experience and earn extra money, according to J. C. Davidson, work experience counselor.

The students, who must be 16 years old or over, are employed by local stores for the holiday season. To gain a better understanding of what a sales person is expected to do, the students attended a special class held after school every day for the week before being excused. Each student had to attend in order to be excused for the week of Dec. 11 through Dec. 15.

Students participating must have been approved by each of their teachers. Only those maintaining a C grade average in every class were eligible. They will be expected to make up all work missed during the week they are absent from school, Davidson said.

Do you have a question about cancer? The American Cancer Society has available, without cost, a pamphlet entitled, "101 Answers to Your Questions About Cancer."

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