



# HOUSING SANITATION TRAINING

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Housing Training Section

Mark Twain is quoted as saying, "Everybody talks about the weather a lot but no one does anything about it." Almost the same could be said about the subject of Housing. People have been deploring the slums of this country for some time, but relatively few persons have attempted to do anything about the situation.

The American Public Health Association, through its Committee on the Hygiene of Housing, is an organization that has done something on Housing. It has conducted research on the Basic Principles of Healthful Housing; it has developed a method for measuring these principles in existing housing; and it is now exploring the subject of regulations. The method the APHA has developed gives us the tool for evaluating a very complex subject in such a way that ordinary laymen, as well as engineers, can understand these problems. A clear understanding of the basic problems is necessary before policy or plans for concerted action can be carried out without lost motion or wasteful duplication.

The Public Health Service has been cognizant of the need for service in housing sanitation. During the war considerable progress was made in helping communities with their environmental sanitation problems. The need for field training of local health departments in the latest practices and *modus operandi* developed in the last few years has been evident. A housing sanitation section has recently been activated in the Training Division of the

Communicable Disease Center to provide this field training. The Public Health Service has entered into an agreement with the Committee on the Hygiene of Health in which the Public Health Service will "promote, install, and service housing surveys." The Training Division of the Communicable Disease Center has been charged with the responsibility of developing training facilities and of supplying consultant services to user agencies. In carrying out this charge, the Training Division has had the cooperation of Dr. James F. Hackney, Director of the Department of Health, City of Atlanta Health Department, and Mr. Stafford W. Graydon, Public Health Engineer. Therefore, it has been possible at this time to conduct a five-week training course in the atmosphere of an active housing program carried out by a city health department. The problems facing each trainee are real and, in most cases, identical with those he will meet at home. It is hoped that sufficient demand in different parts of the country will enable the Training Division to supplement the facilities of the Atlanta Training Station with training at other stations.

In addition to training on the dwelling appraisals, a certain amount of time is spent in a city planning office. Problems of city planning are discussed and considered as they relate to housing problems and the rehabilitation of blighted areas. Although we depend on the "educational approach" to carry out a program, it is



very necessary that equitable, strong, and constitutional laws be developed in order to rehabilitate blighted areas of a community. Regulatory laws on structures, environment, and rehabilitation are very complex, and a general code applicable throughout the country is not feasible. Each trainee is briefed on certain fundamental points which must be considered when discussing these laws.

At the present time, six cities in addition to Atlanta have sent personnel to Atlanta for training. These cities are Little Rock, Ark.; Miami, Fla.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Columbus and Savannah, Ga.; and Bloomington, Ind. The program is offered for supervisory personnel of State and local health departments, and for city planning or rehabilitation commissions. Candidates need not be engineers, but persons recommended should have a background of experience in environmental sanitation, statistics, or city planning. Since part of the training period will be spent considering each trainee's local problem, it is important that only person-

nel well acquainted with their particular areas be considered for enrollment in this program.

It is planned, in cooperation with the Production Division, to develop training aid films, not only on the limited technical subjects such as "deterioration," but also on the broader subjects of the relationship of the dwelling and its environment. Such films can be used to emphasize the need for public health people to make every effort to cooperate with and stimulate other governmental departments. In addition to training aid films, kits for the use of field representatives are being developed. It is contemplated that the kits will fill a much-needed requirement for reference material on the subject of blight elimination.

New subject matter is being added to the general subject of Housing Sanitation. Health officers and engineers are becoming interested in home accident prevention and in rural housing and its environment. It is hoped that in the near future field training programs can be offered in these subjects.



(LEFT) Sanitary Engineer making field inspection of dwelling unit.

(RIGHT) Clerks assist in the analysis of housing sanitation data.

