

Five hundred voluntary standards have been issued including some 250 commercial standards, an equal number of simplified practice recommendations, and eight product standards. All of these, of course, are indirectly of interest to the consumer, some directly. Examples of the latter include standards for ice cream containers and metal containers for other food, aluminum chain-link fencing, body sizing standards for apparel and patterns, attic ventilation fans in residences, aluminum tension window screens, household insecticides, venetian blinds, etc. New voluntary standards under development that are of interest to consumers include urethane foam bedding and seat cushioning, household water softeners, polyethylene plastic containers for petroleum products.

Voluntary standards will also be developed under the new program authorized by the recently enacted Fair Packaging and Labeling Act. These will be of very direct concern to consumers. One of the objects of this new program will be to reduce undue proliferation of quantities of packaged consumer commodities which impairs the reasonable ability of the consumer to make value comparisons in the marketplace.

The NBS carries on a relatively extensive building research program and some fire research activities. These programs and activities generate publications of interest to consumers. Some examples are:

Doors as Barriers to Fire and Smoke.

Weather Resistance of Porcelain Enamels.

Thermal Insulation in Buildings.

Performance Criteria for Sanitary Plumbing Fixtures.

Effects of Thermal Shrinkage on Built-up Roofing.

Building Construction and Maintenance.

A final point. NBS is a most important resource for consumer-oriented programs, but as I said earlier almost entirely of an indirect nature. If this resource is to be exploited, a translation or conversion mechanism must be developed. In other words, ways must be found to take the results of NBS research and convert them into a form that is useful to the non-technical consumer. Technical expertise is needed that can evaluate NBS research results in terms of their usefulness to the consumer and, having done so, put those results in a form that the layman can use. For example, testing of materials and components help Government agencies make purchase choices, but these agencies make bulk purchases based on tests of a few samples chosen under a sound statistical plan. However, the individual consumer cannot buy a refrigerator to test its performance as a guide to future purchases.

I shall be very happy to answer any questions to the best of my ability.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. The subcommittee stands adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 2:20 p.m. the subcommittee was adjourned.)