

## CHAPTER 29

## OCCUPATIONAL REPRODUCTIVE HAZARDS

1. Discussion

a. A reproductive hazard is defined as any occupational stressor (biological, chemical or physical) that has the potential to adversely affect the human reproductive process. For example, it is well known that central nervous system problems often occur in the offspring of mothers exposed to organic mercury during pregnancy. Therefore, based on the examples cited, organic mercury can be classified as a reproductive stressor. Many reproductive hazards also cause other adverse health effects; for example, ethylene oxide is also known to be a carcinogen (i.e., produces cancer).

b. In recent years, concern over reproductive hazards in the workplace has increased significantly. Therefore, it is the Navy's policy to provide safe and healthful working conditions for all employees which will not damage or affect their fertility of offspring.

c. Reference (a) outlines specific controls to be used in the workplace and is available in the OSH Office for all personnel to review.