

No human kidney damage

Self-serve gasoline pumps seem safe

Male rats who sniff unleaded gasoline vapors are known to suffer kidney damage.

Should motorists who pump their own gasoline have a similar concern? No, according to research tests at Oakland University.

The question led to an unusual collaboration between the General Motors Research Labs and Oakland University Professor Arun K. Roy.

The GM-OU research was prompted by earlier studies done by the major oil companies and other investigators in this country and abroad," Roy said.

Those results showed that inhalation of unleaded gasoline vapors by male rats results in the accumulation of excessive protein droplets in the kidney. These droplets may lead to cell death and kidney damage.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL Protection Agency became concerned because more than 80 percent of the driving public uses self-service pumps. The agency was worried

about the effect of gasoline vapors on humans.

Roy said the major cause of the formation of the kidney droplets is a highly volatile hydrocarbon in the gasoline. It is also in certain industrial solvents.

EPA's interest in the issue was growing, and the agency could have ordered oil companies to install vapor collection devices at the gasoline pump or auto companies to install on-board controls for recovery of gasoline vapors.

Roy said the major component of the droplets in the rat kidney is alpha 2u globulin, a rat urinary protein discovered by Roy and long used in his studies of aging and other hormone-related disorders.

"GENERAL MOTORS was quick to respond to this public health issue and came to me for help," Roy said.

The goal was to initiate an in-depth study to establish the mode of action of the gasoline on kidney function.

Researchers at GM and OU are currently studying the kidney damage from the biochemical, molecular and cell biological aspects. They are looking also at age, sex and species difference in gasoline toxicity, he said.

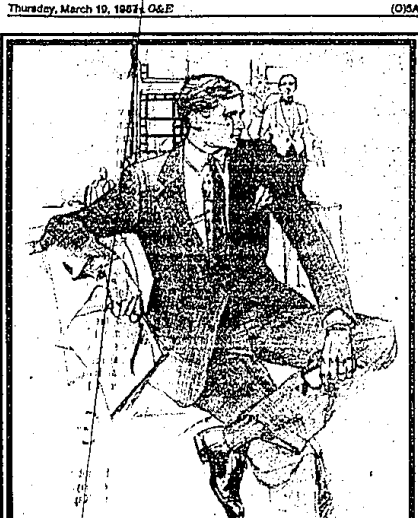
Results over the last 12 months have shown no harm to humans and should ease concerns of the Environmental Protection Agency and the auto and oil industries, Roy said.

EXPERIMENTS have consistently shown no cause for alarm for the human population, Roy said, "as al-

pha 2u globulin is only found in rats and other rodents which show excessive proteinuria (protein in the urine) and is not found in human subjects."

When the studies are complete and all of the data analyzed, it will eliminate the concern for human health and avoid the need for costly alterations to the current generation of internal combustion engines.

Participating in the study for GM were Drs. B.D. Gars and M.J. Olson. Joining Professor Roy at OU were Drs. C.V.R. Murty and F.H. Sarkar as well as two doctoral students, William Demyan and Michael Mancini.



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Civil rights chief opens 'Cities' talks

John Castillo, director of the state Civil Rights Commission, will be first speaker in the "Rebirth of Cities" series on the Oakland University campus near Rochester.

Castillo will speak at 1:45 p.m. Wednesday, March 25, in the Crocker of the Oakland Center. His topic will be "Hispanic Contributions to the Urban Setting."

With him will be Dr. Melvin Villarreal, assistant director for state and federal programs of the Lansing School District.

Admission to all programs in the Martin Luther King Jr./Rosa Parks program is free. Others in the series, all at 1:45 in the Crocker, will be:

- March 30 — David Garcia, NBC correspondent, "Urban Revitalization — a Reporter's Notebook."
- April 6 — Dr. Linda Williams, Joint Center for Political Studies, "The Impact of American Political Economy on Detroit's Blacks."
- April 13 — Marva Collins, principal of Westside Preparatory School in Chicago, "Educating for Better Cities."

UAW's Ephlin due at OU

Donald F. Ephlin, UAW international vice president, will speak on "Changing Labor Relations in the Auto Industry" in a new labor-management Forum opening April 7 at Oakland University.

Ephlin is director of UAW General Motors Department, largest in the union with 350,000 members.

The new series is sponsored by the

Ken Morris Labor Studies Center and will feature distinguished speakers from labor, business, government and academia.

The luncheon will begin at 12:15 p.m. in Meadow Brook Hall. Cost is \$15 a person, and the first 75 reservations will be honored. For registration information, call the Morris Center at 370-3125.

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Saturday, March 21, join us 1:00 to 4:00 for informal modeling of Children's winning spring/summer looks. A preview starting left. Pink cotton floral chintz dress by Celi Almsworth. With white organdy collar, ruffled sleeve and hat. Toddlers 2T, 3T, 4T, 48.00. Girls 4 to 6X, 52.00. Center, Nannette's pink and white floral print dress. With white eyelet apron. Plus a hat! Polyester/cotton for girls 4 to 6X, 52.00. Toddler 2T, 3T, 4T, 49.00. Infant's (with bonnet), 12, 18, 24 months, 48.00. With Gund's cuddly 21" bunny in white, pink, tan or brown, 28.00. Right, boy's multistriped shortall, 20.00. Shirt, 12.00. Both polyester/cotton for Toddler 2T, 3T, 4T and Infants 12, 18, 24 months. Children's, Second Level, Somerset Mall. Saturday, March 28th, 1:00 to 3:00, a special Easter movie for the kids! Complete with popcorn and balloons!

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