

NTA gets OK for U.S. detergents

The Environmental Protection Agency has said it sees no reason to take regulatory action against resumed use of nitrilotriacetic acid (NTA) as a phosphate replacement in household detergents.

U.S. manufacturers voluntarily stopped using the substance in household detergents after a 1970 study showed possible carcinogenic effects. A *National Toxicology Report* issued earlier this year said NTA is not a mutagen, but that it does cause cancer in urinary tracts of mice and rats by an unknown mechanism. EPA, in a letter to Procter & Gamble, said projected use levels are low and therefore risks also would be low.

U.S. NTA producers, Monsanto and W.R. Grace, currently produce about 75 million pounds per year, with 65 million exported to Canada and Europe and the rest used in domestic industrial and institutional products.

Procter & Gamble had inquired about NTA for potential use in detergents for markets with complete phosphate

bans. NTA is more expensive than zeolite, another phosphate replacement, but is better as a sequestering agent. □

A&W plant opens

Chemical Marketing Reporter said in mid-May that a new Albright & Wilson Ltd. sulfonation plant in Italy has begun. The \$3 million plant can produce up to 16,000 tons annually of active ingredient for liquid detergents, hard surface cleaners and other cleaning products, the article said. The plant is located at Frosinone, south of Rome, and includes two sulfur burners and two reactors for sulfation and sulfonation of alcohols and dodecylbenzene. □

New enzyme firm

American Enzyme Corp., a new firm, has opened manufacturing facilities in Mequon, WI, to produce special-purpose as well as custom-blended enzyme formulations. The special-purpose enzyme formulations include products for chemical specialty manufacturers; custom-blended formulations are aimed at waste disposal applications. □

Meetings

Detergents Eight-0 speakers meet

Final program refinements for Detergents Eight-0, an AOCS short course on soaps and detergents, were discussed by short course speakers at a special gathering during the ISF/AOCS World Congress in New York.

The course will be held Sept. 14-17, 1980, at the Hershey Hotel & Country Club in Hershey, PA. Registration information is available from Detergents Eight-0, AOCS, 508 S. Sixth St., Champaign, IL 61820 (telephone: 217-359-2344).

During their one-hour meeting, speakers coordinated the content of their talks to insure there is minimal overlap and that they cover all major factors in producing successful products. The program is directed toward chemists and chemical engineers in the soap and detergent industry and related fields. It is designed to provide a thorough basic groundwork for persons new to the industry, as well as a stimulating review and update for experienced workers.

The program will consist of five sessions, held each

morning and evening. The concluding session on the morning of Wednesday, Sept. 17, will be a question-and-answer period at which registrants may question faculty members.

Session topic: What Constraints Do We Operate Under, session chairman, H. Stupel; speakers: T.E. Brenner, "The Impact of Government on the Detergent Industry in the 1980s;" Louis Kravetz, "Biodegradation of Nonionic Ethoxylates;" A. Gilbert, "Safety of Detergent Products;" J. Bindo, "Surfactant Raw Material Outlook for the 1980s;" and R. Wendt, "Disposal of Detergent Manufacturing Waste."

Session topic: What Do We Have To Work With, session chairman, A. Cahn; speakers: N.O.V. Sonntag, "Fatty Acids and Other Renewable Raw Materials;" O. Neiditch, "Minor Additives in Heavy-Duty Detergents;" C. Starace, "Enzymes;" G.C. Schweiker, "Detergent Builders;" and M. Mauser, "Surfactant Update."

Session topic: How Do We Make A Technical Product,