

January 11, 1977

Editor
Job, Safety & Health
Occupational Safety & Health Administration
3rd & Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Sir:

The article TROUBLE IN THE AUTO REPAIR SHOP in the December, 1976 issue of Job Safety & Health contained the following incorrect statement attributed to me.

"For auto mechanics, the greatest threat of incipient asbestosis occurs in service stations where 50% of all brake work is performed."

I did not make any such statement. At a meeting in Cincinnati on March 19, 1976 with industry representatives and scientists from NIOSH and Mt. Sinai Department of Environmental Medicine I presented data on the number of mechanics employed in various categories of garages where brake service work is performed. A copy of the minutes of that meeting, prepared by John Dement of NIOSH, is attached.

At the Cincinnati meeting, Dr. Selikoff summarized the findings of Mt. Sinai investigators concerning excessive asbestos fiber exposure in two brake service garages in New York City. The excessive airborne concentrations resulted from the lack of adequate engineering controls and the prevalence of improper work practices such as the use of compressed air hoses in the cleaning of brake assemblies. Such conditions are not necessarily typical of the brake service industry.

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Field investigations by Raybestos-Manhattan and others have shown that if brake service work is performed with proper engineering controls and work practices, the airborne concentrations of asbestos fibers will be well within the limits set forth in the OSHA Standard for exposure to asbestos dust.

We are well aware of the vital need to educate brake service mechanics in safe work procedure. Raybestos-Manhattan's program to provide such information includes training films, brake service manuals which include recommended procedures for reducing dust during brake servicing, and specific work practice instructions included with every package of brake lining. Additional information on asbestos related disease, monitoring methods for recommended respirators and vacuum cleaners suitable for use in removing asbestos dust is available on request. Copies of these materials are enclosed.

Very truly yours,

(signed) John H. Marsh

/as

Enclosure

cc: Mr. K. A. Bodden
Dr. B. F. Craft
Mr. J. M. Dement
Dr. I. J. Selikoff
bcc: Mr. F. S. Daly
Mr. R. M. Gordon
Mr. E. W. Drislane
Mr. R. A. Jann
Mr. R. H. Mereness
Mr. R. R. Moalli
Mr. W. S. Simpson
Mr. I. H. Weaver