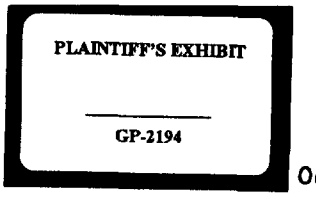

R&D 2
R+D 347
per CW 9-26-7

October 7, 1971

Mr. W. H. Hunt — Portland

C. W. Lehnert — Tigard Lab

ASBESTOS FIBER

We do market joint compounds and interior surfacing textures which contain between three and seven percent asbestos fiber. Our sales level of these products is over 50,000 tons annually, so it is an important business for us. We do not, however, market the fireproofing plaster which is mentioned in the correspondence from National Gypsum and might contain as much as 25% asbestos.

Glenn has asked us to try to eliminate the asbestos in these products. We have been moderately successful in as much as we are in the process of reducing or eliminating the asbestos from our texture line. We had felt that the presence of asbestos in the textures would be more critical because they are spray applied and there would be more danger of inhaling the fibers. If National Gypsum is correct, the joint compounds will also come under considerable pressure from the environmental people.

In any event, we will expedite our efforts to get rid of the asbestos in the joint compounds. This will be far more difficult because the asbestos controls the working properties which are essential to acceptance by the contractors. Our competition will have the same problems, so it will be a case of finding a solution before they do.

It might be helpful to have any information from the seminar Mr. Fay mentions. We had heard some time ago that limitations might be imposed upon the quantity of asbestos that would be permitted in a given product. If so, the problem would not be as difficult as completely eliminating asbestos fiber. If you agree, I will contact Mr. Fay to see if there is any information he can pass along to us. I have made copies of the correspondence and am returning your file.

C. W. L.

CWL:elz

Attachment