

FILE NAME: Asbestos in Hair Dryers (HD)

DATE: 1979 Nov 30

DOC#: HD050

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: General Electric Letter to CPSC with Comment on the Final NIOSH Report on Hair Dryer Tests for Asbestos Emission

# GENERAL ELECTRIC

AHS  
HOUSEWARES  
AND AUDIO  
BUSINESS  
DIVISION

Dec 1 1979  
GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY . . . . . 1285 BOSTON AVENUE  
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT 06602, Phone (203) 334-1012

November 30, 1979

RECEIVED

Mrs. Catherine Cook  
Director, Division of Product  
Defect Correction  
Consumer Product Safety Commission  
5401 Westbard Avenue  
Bethesda, Maryland

DEC - 6 1979

Division of Product Defect Correction  
Compliance and Enforcement  
CPSC

Re: CPSC-ID 79-109

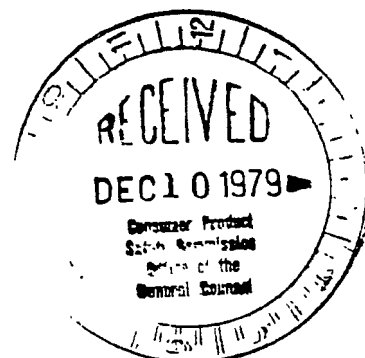
Dear Mrs. Cook:

Your letter of November 2, 1979, offered us the opportunity to comment on the final NIOSH report on hairdryer tests for asbestos emission and Dr. Nicholson's analysis of the report. We would like to make the following comment:

As originally conceived, the NIOSH test was intended to determine the presence and emission rate of asbestos fibers for hand-held hairdryers and tabletop hood dryers. The final report, however, included test results for a stand-mounted commercial dryer and a hand-held heat gun. The asbestos mass concentration values for these products was 7652 ng/m<sup>3</sup>, far exceeding the maximum concentration from the hand-held and tabletop hood dryers of 39 ng/m<sup>3</sup>. Portions of Dr. Nicholson's report, which was quoted by the media and repeated in the CPSC November 2 Newsletter, stated that the asbestos emissions from the "hairdryers" were "the highest we have measured in 8 years"<sup>(1)</sup> of surveys of environmental conditions. This statement is valid only if the commercial hairdryer and heat gun are included.

Dr. Nicholson's comment should have been directed to the commercial hairdryer only and he should not have characterized all of the products tested as if they were all in the same family. This gross characterization raises the question of fairness and objectivity of the analysis.

<sup>(1)</sup>Washington Post, November 4, 1979



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We would appreciate segregation of the test results on the commercial hairdryer and the heat gun from the hairdryer results when any further discussion of the NIOSH report are released to the public and an explanation of the incorrect characterization should be made in subsequent CPSC News Bulletins.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R W Mazzacane".

Robert W. Mazzacane  
Manager-Product Safety & Standards  
Housewares Engineering Department

RWM/lis