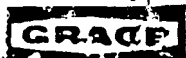


FILE NAME: WR Grace (WRG)

DATE: January 1965

DOC#: WRG147

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: 1965 Memo to G.W. Blackwood from J.A. Kelley regarding dust situation at Libby



ZONOLITE

DIVISION W. R. GRACE & CO.

T-2/5/65 (1)
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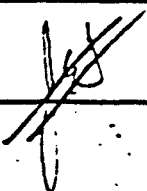
INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

Dict. January 8, 1965

Date January 13, 1965

To G. W. Blackwood JAN 15 1965 at Cambridge

From J. A. Kelley at Chicago

Subject: 

Dear George:

Further to my letter of January 7 and complying with your previous request about full information and direction regarding the dust situation at Libby, I am attaching a history of the entire dust matter at Libby written by Earl Lovick as well as a dust control report by Bleich.

As you know, I was at Libby and we reviewed this entire situation. There is an immediate step needed and which had been planned for additional dust collection in the dry mill which is where our greatest trouble is. The purpose for this is to bring our dust count in line with the dust recommendations of the Montana State Health Department. I should say that I found that the State of Montana had inspected Libby on several occasions and for the first time I saw the reports which were received at Libby but never sent to me. Our record is not as good as it should be as far as the state is concerned. We made some improvement but not nearly enough.

The second important decision made at Libby was that we would move as fast as possible to eliminate the dry mill. This has been our plan all along but because of our balance problem we could not see the light as to when this could be done. We must engineer the whole job and I would hope that we could tie down some kind of a definite plan by September 1, 1965. We just simply could not afford the cost of rehabilitating the present dry mill concentrating circuits to make it a modern and completely dust free operation.

You understand that we are not talking about eliminating the screening portions of the dry mill which are necessary after the concentrates have been dried, but the products handled in the screening station should be relatively free of asbestos and since no concentrating is involved can be rather fully enclosed and ventilated.



20094103

G. W. Blackwood

- 2 -

January 13, 1965

~~As previously reported to you, the situation with regard to the doctors and Maryland Casualty is under control and we will await their advice as to anything further that should be done.~~

I am directing Floyd Stewart, who expects to be in Libby in March, to make a thorough inspection as a follow-up to Bleich's report on each of the various dust producing points.

I should add further that the conversation with Dr. Nelson certainly indicated that there may be a long-term problem with some of our employees at Libby. No one knows just what effect the dust in the mill and in the operation has upon an individual because we have all of the extremes. We have some men who have worked in dusty atmospheres for many years and show no difficulty and others who are relatively new employees working in less dusty atmospheres who have trouble, and then there are all shades in between.

By a newspaper account, the city of Libby has an air pollution problem which is a result of hydrocarbons coming from automobiles and oil burners as well as from J. Neils' lumber operation. None of our operations contribute to air pollution in the town except the sporadic occasional operation of the expanding plant which is down town.

~~No one knows which, if any, of the minerals in any of our dust would be harmful except that asbestos has a known record for harmfulness. Of course, we realize that any dust can be harmful and the only answer is control. I have made this plain to everybody at Libby and have insisted that every effort be made for the control of the dust as well as insistence upon the use of respirators by employees where they are necessary and required.~~

Your criticism and comments would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

J. A. Kelley
J. A. Kelley

JAK:pf

1/2/65 - Doc for dust situation at Libby submitted - Sent back to Riff
on 2/2/65 to be put in RCA format.

1/2/65

20094104