

Managers' Notice

No. 962

July 8, 1974

Subject: New PVC Facility at Louisville

The following is being released to the news media today:

Washington. -- B.F. Goodrich Chemical Company is constructing a new polyvinyl chloride (PVC) facility at its Louisville, Kentucky plant, it was announced here today by John L. Nelson, Vice President of Manufacturing.

Nelson reported on the new facility in testimony at hearings on the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration's proposed standard to reduce vinyl chloride in the work atmosphere to a "no detectable" level.

The new Louisville facility will incorporate the company's latest PVC technology, according to Nelson. He said the project is part of the company's continuing program to produce the widely used plastic resin more efficiently in all Goodrich PVC plants.

Nelson said the new facility will employ polymer reactors much larger than any now used in the company's five PVC plants. It will also include new computer controls.

"We expect vinyl chloride exposure levels will be lower than those currently existing in our PVC plants," Nelson continued, "but actual levels will not be known until the new plant is in operation."

Nelson said the new facility will go into production by mid-1975. Construction is already underway following preliminary engineering work that began in 1972.

The company's research activities could lead to further improvements even after the new facility is operating, Nelson added.

He pointed out that any additional major improvements could take up to 24 months after the completion of developmental work.

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In May, Goodrich said it is conducting a multi-million dollar research and development program, involving more than 100 scientists, engineers and technicians, in an all-out effort to reduce to negligible levels vinyl chloride losses from all sources.

In his testimony, Nelson said Goodrich is "committed to reducing vinyl chloride exposure to the lowest level that is feasible through a combination of engineering changes, work practices, the part-time use of respiratory equipment by employees and technological development."

However, Nelson repeated the company's and the industry's position that the proposed "no detectable" level is not technically feasible and neither is the full-time use of respiratory equipment by employees, as industry experts testified earlier in the OSHA hearings.

If the proposed standard is adopted, Nelson said Goodrich would be forced to shut down its vinyl monomer and polyvinyl chloride plants.

Testifying with Nelson was Dr. Condict Moore of the University of Louisville's Medical School. Dr. Moore described the programs the school has initiated under a grant from Goodrich to conduct medical studies related to vinyl chloride exposure.

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