

*Pittsburgh Corning
Tyler, Texas*

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
550 Main Street, Federal Office Bldg., Rm. 8409
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

January 17, 1972



Mr. Martin C. Gukasch, P.E., Director
Division of Occupational Health and Radiation Control
Texas State Department of Health
1100 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756

Dear Mr. Gukasch:

As previously mentioned in the NIOSH survey report of the Pittsburgh Corning Corporation in Tyler, Texas dated December 7, 1971, nurseries in the Tyler area purchase burlap bags, previously used for the storage of mesoite asbestos, for use in their nurseries. On a recent trip to Tyler, a visit was made to the Zliner Nursery, one of the nurseries having purchased these bags. Mr. Elbert Panton, nursery salesman, explained that they had not purchased any bags since 1970; however, he showed us a barn where some 1500 - 2000 bags are stored. He indicated that they are used infrequently but while we were there a woman came in, picked up a bag, and shook it vigorously for 15 - 30 seconds in the performance of her work, thus creating a large dust cloud in her breathing zone. Following this, we asked for a bag to bring back to Cincinnati for a laboratory evaluation.

A recent report by J. Wagner, et al. in the British Medical Bulletin, (1971, Vol. 27, No. 1, p. 73) entitled "Epidemiology of Asbestos Cancers" refers to a few cases of mesotheliomas in women who cleaned bags previously containing asbestos.

Due to the potential for a serious health problem, the rationale for the use of burlap bags, previously used for storage of asbestos, should be evaluated in not only this nursery but in others where similar conditions might exist.

T-12-11

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Enclosed is a laboratory report of our findings.

Sincerely yours,

Richard A. Leman, Epidemiologist
Biometry Branch
Division of Field Studies
and Clinical Investigations

Roy Fleming, Engineer
Environmental Investigations Branch
Division of Field Studies
and Clinical Investigations

Enclosure:
NIOSH Laboratory Report

cc: Director, DFSCI
Acting Deputy Director, DFSCI ✓
Acting Chief, Environmental Investigations Branch, DFSCI
Regional Program Director, Region VI, NIOSH