PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

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Analysis of representative samples of spackling, patching, and taping compounds by grantees of HEW's National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences* has shown that some contain asbestos minerals as well as other potentially harmful substances. Measurements suggest that home repair or construction work involving use of such materials may result in exposure to dust at concentrations sufficient to produce disease.**

Workers exposed to asbestos have been shown to face a greatly increased risk of developing lung cancer, mesothelioma (a rare form of cancer), cancers of the gastrointestinal tract, and asbestosis (a scarring of the lungs). These effects generally do not show up until two or three--and sometimes even four--decades after the first exposure to asbestos.

Recently, Drs. A.N. Rohl, A.M. Langer, I.J. Selikoff, and W.J. Nicholson at Mount Sinai School of Medicine analyzed 15 representative samples of consumer spackling and patching compounds and 10 of industrial drywall taping compounds for asbestos mineral content. These NIEHS grantees purchased four of the

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**Details of these findings by Drs. Rohl, Langer, Selikoff, and Nicholson are being published in the current issue of SCIENCE.

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packling and patching compounds at hardware stores in the New York City area in 1972 or earlier, and the remainder in January 1974.

Spackling and drywall taping compounds consist of finely-grained white powder or premixed pastes. Although Plaster of Paris is supposedly the major constituent, other light-colored materials including clays, micas, quartz, tal and ground limestone supplement or replace the plaster in many formulations. Additionally, chrysotile asbestos is added to some products, apparently because these minute fibers act as reinforcing agents.

Analysis of the 15 consumer spackling and patching samples has shown that five contained appreciable amounts of chrysotile or other asbestos minerals, as did 9 of the 10 industrial products. Many contained substantial amounts of quartz, talc, and other minerals. Once embedded in the lungs, quartz or silica particles--like those of asbestos--may never be removed. They can produce chronic obstructive and fibrotic diseases after prolonged exposure. Talc also can produce pulmonary fibrosis.

Air samples obtained during the use of asbestos-containing spackle compounds were analyzed and showed concentrations frequently in excess of the current occupational standard for permissible asbestos exposure levels. Fiber counts measured during mixing for example were found to be 7-12 times greater than the current occupational standard. Detectable fiber concentrations were found in adjacent rooms during mixing, and fibers were still suspended in the room air at least 15 minutes after mixing had ceased.

These findings suggest the possibility of significant asbestos exposure during home construction and repair. Additional work by the scientists suggests that members of the entire household or other occupants of a building may also inhale asbestos fibers. This could occur during mixing, sanding, or cleaning up of debris.

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These results are alarming when considered in relation to other evidence being accumulated by the Mount Sinai group that indicates that far less than the intense exposure of the work environment is capable of producing asbestos-related disease. X-ray examination of 210 family contacts who lived with the men who produced asbestos insulation at a Paterson, New Jersey, plant from 1941 to 1954 has shown that 40 percent have the kinds of abnormalities in their lungs common to asbestos workers. In some cases, the worker had been at the Paterson plant for only a few days.

Thus, it appears likely that the use of spackling, patching, and taping compounds containing appreciable levels of asbestos minerals in home repair work may expose the user and other members of the household to concentrations of asbestos that may lead to disease.

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