

ION REPORT

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unless at least three ACB members request a review of Stewart's decision.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH: Occupational Safety & Health Administration has ruled that workers can obtain their on-the-job medical records, including information relating to exposure to dangerous substances, under a new rule to take effect Aug 21.

The regulation requires employers to furnish medical records within 15 days after requested to do so, and also requires employers to furnish such records to unions representing workers, with consent of the employees, and to furnish records to OSHA investigators — without prior worker consent.

Asst Secy of Labor Eula Bingham said the regulation will enable workers to obtain information regarding exposure to dangerous substances which "previously has been locked away in employers' files" and will make it easier for employees to determine if on-the-job exposures result in health hazards.

OSHA estimates some 20-25 million workers are exposed directly to chemicals which it regulates.

Dept of Labor also announced procedures "to protect employees in private industry who 'blow the whistle' on their employers for violating certain Federal environmental laws."

Specifically, DOL says, those laws are the Safe Drinking Water Act, Water Pollution Control Act, Toxic Substances Control Act, Solid Waste Disposal Act, Clean Air Act, and Energy Reorganization Act.

Copies of "Procedures for the Handling of Discrimination Complaints Under Federal Employee Protection Statutes" may be obtained from Office of Information & Consumer Affairs, Employment Standards Administration, Rm C-4331, US Dept of Labor, Washington, DC 20210.

—o— Dow Chemical Co reported it has turned up evidence of a higher-than-normal level of glioblastoma (a type of brain cancer) among workers at its Freeport chemical plant, with 13 deaths from brain cancers (nine apparently glioblastoma) located in preliminary review of medical records of 45,000 employees over the past 40 years.

Glioblastomas were determined as the cause of death for 10 workers at Union Carbide Corp's Texas City plant, with five brain tumor deaths reported for Monsanto's plant in the same city, in earlier studies. Occupational Safety & Health Administration believes those deaths may be linked to exposure to vinyl chloride.

Dow says none of the 13 brain tumor victims located by its study worked in the Freeport vinyl chloride department.

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OSHA has been researching records of a number of chemical firms in the Southeast Texas area, and has located 33 brain tumor deaths in Brazoria County (including those of the Dow workers). Dow officials say it appears salaried employees were more likely to develop brain tumors than hourly workers; they feel this indicates additional study is needed on socioeconomic variables which may be involved.

The study also indicated slightly higher risk of brain cancer among magnesium workers and workers exposed to chlorine, hydrogen chloride and magnesium oxide — none, Dow notes, considered to be carcinogenic.

—o— US Dist Judge Robert Parker, Beaumont, ordered a reduction of damages to \$1.1 million to Mrs Alberta Migues, Groves, in the death of her husband, Russell Migues, from Nicolet Industries, Ambler, Penn.

A jury awarded \$3 million in Migues' death, which was diagnosed as mesothelioma, a cancer apparently linked to exposure to asbestos. Migues worked for 33 years as an insulator for Texaco in Port Arthur. Nicolet was one of 14 companies supplying insulation to Texaco; the other 13 settled out of court with Mrs Migues for \$400,000.

TREGELLAS APPLICATION: Dept of Water Resources announced reconvening of a hearing on the application of Bill Tregellas and Rusty Tregellas dba Figure 1 Ranch Feedlot for a waste disposal permit at 11 am June 12 in the Gray County Courthouse, Pampa.

The hearing was continued from Sept 19.

PRESS CONFERENCE: Texas Cmte on Natural Resources has set a press conference for 10 am Thursday at the entrance to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept Bldg regarding what are described as "controversial recent decisions" by the P&W Cmn on various environmental matters. Other environmental groups also are to participate.

ACB PERMITS: The Air Control Board has received these permit applications:

Repetro Inc, Divn of Aegis Corp, 1906 N Longview, Kilgore, reclamation facility; Broyhill Furniture Industries Inc, 118 E Alpine, Austin, finishing room; Center Plywood Co, 1010 Longsport, Center, plaque spray finishing facility; Texas Instruments Inc, 1312 Crosby, Carrollton, filter cartridge dust collector; J H Browning, Gonzales, egg farm; Renewable Energy Corp, 7715 Alvin, Manuel, ethanol fermentation/distillation facility; Georgia-Pacific Corp, Pasadena, high density

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