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04944-00

OWENS CORNING
FIBERGLAS

intra-company correspondence

to J. L. Konzen, M.D. - T/11

from G. E. Devitt - T/11

date May 1, 1978

subject BERLIN - ASBESTOS

cc: D. J. Billmaier, M.D. - T/11

As requested, I'm supplying you with an overview of the Berlin Plant, with especial regard to asbestos exposures to personnel.

To refresh your memory, all Kaylo products were fabricated on pouring lines #1 and #2, with #1 handling flatware and #2 molded pipe. Initial surveys were made by Bill Bradley in September, 1968, utilizing impinger counting techniques. He made a later survey in June, 1969, using both impinger and membrane filter fiber counts.

Then, starting in June, 1970, a series of samplings were carried out using personnel from G. D. Clayton and shortly thereafter, the writer got into the act. We continued with Clayton through 1974 and finally with EHL (Kemron) since then. In addition to the regular industrial hygiene surveys, a number of special studies were carried out through late 1970, 1971, and 1972, until we ceased producing Kaylo which contained asbestos.

The personnel who, on the average, had relatively high exposures (often $\geq$ 5-10 f/cc) were batch handlers and line stripping personnel, with almost everyone else in the production and fabrication areas being exposed to measurable amounts of fibers.

A number of engineering and process alterations were made in the plant, but the general level of success left something to be desired. From the standpoint of asbestos exposure, the best control was the elimination of asbestos from the product, and Berlin became "asbestos free" about November 1972.

Interim measures through 1970-1972, consisted primarily of the upgrading of the mandatory program for respirator usage. Proper respirators, properly maintained were widely used, and the enforcement program was generally good, although not 100%.

With the production of Kaylo AF, the plant got into a dusting problem, which has resulted in a series of tests to survey the possible SiO_2 problem. However, this subject is not actually germane to the present problem.

In summary, there is no question that there was a real situation in which measurable, and in some jobs, excessive exposures to asbestos existed. The true exposure to individuals is difficult to evaluate because of usage of

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personal protective equipment. Further, industrial hygiene data which I feel has any real validity goes back only to 1970, although OCF acquired the plant in 1958. Conversation with long term plant employees leaves one with the feeling that conditions as we evaluated them in 1970-1972 were not that different from a subjective viewpoint in earlier years.

Jerry

Gerald E. Devitt

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