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Attached FYI.

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## Plastics Corner

Firestone Plastics Co., one of the larger producers of polyvinyl chloride in the U.S., brought forth a new proposed standard for employee safety at the OSHA hearings in Washington.

Todd C. Walker, president of the company, with headquarters in Pottstown, Pa., supported an exposure level of 25 ppm time weighted average (TWA) coupled with a 40 ppm ceiling.

"This exposure level should be maintained as the permanent standard until further ongoing medical experimentation and study — of the human as well as animal experience — is completed and more definite conclusions have been reached concerning the nature and consequences vinyl chloride may have on industry employees," Mr. Walker said.

Firestone had retained an independent organization to conduct an extensive feasibility study based on known technology. It was estimated that it might cost as much as \$20 million for Firestone to meet the 25 ppm TWA and 40 ppm ceiling which it recommended.

Mr. Walker thus disagreed with the recommendations of The Society of the Plastics Industry for stepped reductions. It will be recalled that such a proposal was presented at the hearings on June 26 by Anton Vittone, chairman of SPT's Committee of VCM and PVC Producers, and president of B. F. Goodrich Chemical Co. SPT's recommendation was as follows:

For VCM producing plants, recommended that effective Oct. 5, 1974 a ceiling of 40 ppm of VCM and a maximum daily weighted average of 25 ppm be the rule. Levels above 40 ppm would require the use of practical and effective respiratory protection. Effective Oct. 5, 1975, a ceiling level of 25 ppm with no TWA would be the rule. Levels above 25 ppm would require the use of respiratory protection.

## New Exposure Level Plan Submitted at Hearings By Firestone Plastics

For VCM producing plants, effective Oct. 5, 1974, a ceiling of 25 ppm with a TWA average of 10 ppm was recommended. Levels above 25 ppm would require the utilization of respiratory protection. Effective Oct. 5, 1975, a ceiling of 10 ppm and a maximum TWA of 5 ppm was recommended. Levels above 10 ppm would require respiratory protection.

At the conclusion of the hearings on July 11, Daniel P. Boyd, director of the OSHA Office of Standards Development,

at an impromptu press conference said that the final standard would not be so tough as to force a shutdown of the vinyl chloride industry. He seemed to indicate that the standard would be fixed somewhere "between zero and 25 ppm."

Administrative Law Judge Gordon Myatt fixed August 23 as the final day for submission of post-hearing comments and exhibits. He also announced that the Foster D. Snell Co. had been retained by OSHA to conduct a technological and feasibility study on the question.

## Both Sides Heard At OSHA Hearings

Arguments both for and against tight controls over conditions at plants handling vinyls were made at the recent OSHA hearings in Washington.

Johns-Manville Corp., which now lists itself as the largest producer of PVC pipe in the United States, asked OSHA to exempt manufacturers of PVC pipe and fittings from the proposed standards. A suggested alternative was to develop a separate standard for the PVC pipe industry.

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. recommended the establishment of separate standards for producers of VC monomer, PVC resin, and fabricators. It said that it "fails to see how OSHA can scientifically conclude that exposure to vinyl chloride at concentrations of 50 ppm can constitute a serious health hazard to humans."

The Armstrong Cork Co. re-

quested OSHA to exempt from coverage under the standards any manufacturer using PVC resin containing less than 0.2 per cent uncombined monomer.

Labor and representatives of the membership of the American Chemical Society supported the proposed OSHA standard. The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers warned that VCM is creating a psychological problem among long-term workers, who are worried about what may be happening to them as a result of their past exposure. Anthony Mazzochi of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union questioned industry claims as to the technical infeasibility of the proposed standard. He also urged that fabricators be included in the coverage. The United Rubber Workers supported OSHA. The ACS endorsed the proposed "no detectable" standard because of the lack of available data establishing a safe level of exposure to vinyl chloride, but recommended that periodic review of the standard be made in light of new data. In cross examination, some representatives of companies involved with VCM and PVC who belong to the ACS said that they felt the ACS position was not truly representative opinion of the membership, since, as far as they knew, nobody in the vinyl