

September 7, 1972

Hearing Clerk
Department of Health, Education & Welfare
Room 6-88
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Sir:

We refer to the Federal Register document of August 12, 1972 concerning proposed regulations for asbestos containing talcs as food additives. In this connection we should like to make the following comments:

Concerning the quoted article in "Science", the basis for its discussion is very weak and hypothetical as the subsequent letters from the readers of the magazine proved.

Moreover, the term "asbestos-form" is, in our opinion, arbitrary in that any fibrous material including such materials as cellulose, cotton, etc. could be considered "asbestos form". We believe that the various types of asbestos, that is, chrysotile, crocidolite, anthophyllite, tremolite, etc. should be spelled out as the contaminant. This has the double advantage of also providing a satisfactory means of analyzing for the asbestos impurity. We believe this matter has been brought to your attention in connection with cosmetic talcs. Our opinion, as well as that of many others, is that the X-ray diffraction method of detecting asbestos minerals mineralogically is the quickest and most accurate method. It can detect as little as 1% of these impurities and clearly distinguishes them from other minerals including talc, which may take the form of a fiber or rolled-up platelet.

The proposed regulation makes no reference to the size of the contaminating fibers. Literature clearly indicates that the range of 5 to 50 μ m in length is considered hazardous; smaller or larger particles not.

If the agency insists that a limit must be placed on asbestos content, we propose a maximum permissible asbestos mineral content of 1% of talc content by weight. Reliable detection by X-ray diffraction can be set at this level.

Very truly yours,

UNITED SIERRA DIVISION
Cyprus Mines Corporation

H. T. MULRYAN

cc-APB

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT
CAM-323