



PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

K-2007

November 6, 1986

Ms. Judy Spencer
Legal Section
Industrial Commission of Ohio
246 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: OD 187233, OD 187257,
OD PE 8031, OD PE 8032,
OD 24863-22, OD 24864-22
Employer: Massillon State
Hospital (Most
recent employer)
Employee: Charles LaCroix

Attn: Judy Spencer

Dear Ms. Spencer:

Mr. LaCroix has had a long and varied work life spent with at least six different employers. There are some gaps in his employment for which no information is available. They occur between employer one and two, 1952-1955; and between employer two and three, 1959-1964.

During the years 1949-1985, with the exception of the above mentioned periods, he worked as coal-boiler tender or fireman. His job was to fire the boiler by loading coal into the stoker and cleaning and maintaining the boilers during operation and after shut down.

He would have been exposed to uncontrolled and varying concentrations of coal dust, ash, and combustion gases. It has been routine in the past to clean some boilers by raking hot ash out onto the floor of the boiler room and after cooling, breaking up and removing the ash and clinker by hand.

This would be an occasion of high dust and gas exposure.

The primary agent of importance in coal dust and ash is silica. Some metal oxides are also present which can be irritants to the upper respiratory tract. Of even more significance, however, would be the gases, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide, which are emitted from the hot ash. While carbon monoxide does not leave a permanent effect, sulfur dioxide certainly does, causing emphysema and obstructive lung disease similar to and compounded by smoking.

Asbestos would be present, but probably an insignificant contributor except on a rare occasion, such as complete

re-insulation of a boiler which would rarely occur. I believe the asbestos to be a minor contributor here.

Following is a summary of Mr. LaCroix's work and estimated environmental exposure history:

Name - Charles LaCroix - Age 62 - 37 years work history

Employer 1 - W. C. Hardesty Company - 1949-1952

Job Duties - Likely to cause or permit exposures - Boiler tender and fireman, loading coal into stoker, cleaning and maintaining furnace boiler.

Environmental exposures possible - Coal dust, ash, silica, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, low level asbestos.

Employer 2 - Sparta Mosaios Co. - 1955-1959

Job Duties - Tile Press Operator - filling and operating tile-making machine.

Environmental agents - Clay (silica)

Employer 3 - Ohio State Reformatory (3 mos. during 1964)

Job Duties - Boiler fireman, tender, cleaning and firing coal boilers.

Environmental agents- Coal dust, ash, silica, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide low level asbestos.

Employer 4 - Stone Container - Dec. 1965-March 1967

Job Duties - Boiler tender and fireman, firing, cleaning and maintaining coal boilers.

Environmental agents - Coal dust, ash, silica, low-level asbestos sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide.

Employer 5 - ICC Dover Chemical Company, March 1967-August 1968

Job Duties - Boiler fireman, tender, cleaning and maintaining coal boilers.

Environmental agents - Coal dust, ash, silica, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, low level asbestos, chlorine

Employer 6 - Massillon State Hospital - August 1968-April 1985

Job Duties - Stationary boiler engineer, firing, cleaning and maintaining coal boilers.

Environmental agents - coal dust, ash, silica sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, low level asbestos.

Smoking - Thirty years, 1-2 packs per day 30-60 pack year

Diagnosis - Chronic obstructive and restrictive pulmonary disease. Chronic bronchitis probable asbestosis. X-ray and pulmonary function testing done.

Second Opinion - No.

My Opinion - Based upon his work history, there is little doubt that Mr. LaCroix was exposed to a variety of agents which could have contributed to, or helped cause respiratory disease. He constantly refers to asbestos as a causative agent, but I think asbestos is a minor factor here. In employer 3, he refers to "asbestos smoke," there is no such thing.

The environmental agents which are common to all his jobs are silica and sulfur dioxide. Both can cause severe respiratory problems, such as lung fibrosis and emphysema which can lead to obstructive and restrictive lung disease. This is more likely when the two are in combination and especially when the person is a smoker.

It is my opinion that Mr. LaCroix was not exposed to significant amounts of asbestos but to coal dust, silica and sulfur dioxide. These work exposures were seriously complicated by his 30-60 pack year smoking history.

If I can be of further assistance in this claim, please let me know.

Sincerely,

James S. Ferguson
James S. Ferguson, CIH
Industrial Hygienist

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