

Chattanooga, Tennessee
August 10, 1972

TO: J. D. SHOUP
FROM: P. V. NOLAN, M.D.,

ASBESTOS DUST LETTER FROM J. A. SIGMAN,
DATED AUGUST 2, 1972

I agree with the intent of the letter, and the content of the letter except the section regarding accidental exposure of an individual to an area where asbestos dust levels require the use of respirators. The letter states that such accidentally exposed individuals be immediately sent to Medical for an examination.

I have several negative thoughts on rushing this individual to Medical for an examination and no positive feeling for this approach.

First of all, this would unduly alarm all individuals who are working in one of these areas, or anyone who ever has or ever will work there, to say nothing of the psychological effect on the involved person. It would raise all kinds of questions from litigation to emotional problems.

Second, an examination would very likely reveal nothing of significance, since it takes many years to develop problems related to the inhalation of asbestos dust. Also there would be no treatment to be rendered such an individual at that time, except to try to calm the fears and apprehension aroused by his being rushed to Medical.

Third, we would be on record as having exposed the individual to material which could cause pulmonary problems in the future, but which in reality would be unlikely to. This would leave the Company liable for almost any kind of respiratory condition developing in that individual at any time in the future. Certainly for an individual who is accidentally exposed over a twenty, thirty, or more year period to all of the other materials encountered in every day activity which could also cause lung problems, it would be unwise in my opinion to place the Company in a position where it might take the blame for anything that happens.

Finally, I would acknowledge that a one time exposure to asbestos dust could cause problems in later life, but the likelihood is so small it appears to me to be unfair and unwise for the Company to be put in a position where all problems could be blamed on it when, in reality, in only a very, very small number of cases might there be some responsibility.

PVN/jlw

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