

Mr. L. D. Burnett, Jr.
9 East 41st St. - 3rd Floor
New York City

May 16, 1951

Mr. J. K. Honish - 201
Mr. R. S. Hallas - 1109
Mr. M. G. Robinson - 110

Material Labs
U. S. Navy Ship Yard
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Burnett:

We have no way of knowing the composition of the lacquer used on the rigid sheeting to which you refer in your report of call on subject, date of 5/10/51, and can not express an opinion with respect to exposure to the coating. We would not expect the symptoms referred to as being due to the VS-1310 sheeting. The opinion expressed by Dr. German, that the reported sickness might be psychological, sounds quite reasonable, as such experiences are encountered from time to time.

The symptoms mentioned by the employees are not typical of those due to usual industrial exposures. They do not indicate serious complaints. Glad you are following through and finding out the composition of the lacquer.

Very truly yours,

INDUSTRIAL TOXICOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Thos. W. Hale, M. D.

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EXTRA

BAKELITE DIVISION
UNI N CARBIDE AND CARBON CORPORATION
REPORT OF CALL

DIVISION
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Material Labs
 NAME H. E. Navy Ship Yard
Brooklyn, New York
 ADDRESS _____

INTERVIEWED (GIVE TITLE) _____
 Mr. Myer, Chemical Section
 Mr. Allison, Chemical Section
 Mr. Gilbert, Industrial Hygiene
 Mr. Kirk, Safety Department
 Lt. Commander Gorin, Medical Department

By L. D. Burnett, Jr.DATE OF CALL 5/10/51

LAST CALL _____

CONFIDENTIAL _____

SALES BULLETIN _____

CHANGES IN PERSONNEL _____

DISPOSITION LAST 3 COPIES

Mr. J. K. Honish-201
 Mr. R. S. Hellen-1103
 Mr. M. G. Robinson-58
 ✓ Dr. T. W. Hale-300 Madison

Mr. Allison of the Chemical Section of the Materials Labs had called the New York office and advised that they had encountered some trouble with some "Vinylite" rigid sheeting purchased from Virginia Plak. These sheets were our VS-1310 Clear 1/4" thick coated with a white vinyl lacquer and over the white lacquer another coating of a black lacquer, total thickness of the coating approximately .007". It had been reported by one of the foremen in the machine shops that when this material was machined on a lathe that two or three workers had complained of ill effects from fumes coming from the "Vinylite" sheet stock. Called to investigate.

Three or four workers in the machine shop had claimed that as a result of fumes from the "Vinylite" sheet when it was machined caused nervous tension, unusual pressure in their arms and legs and an unpleasant feeling in their lungs. The above mentioned gentlemen were trying to determine if any of the ingredients in our rigid sheeting could have caused these complaints. In inspecting a disk cut from Virginia Plak's sheets there was no indication of any decomposition of the material. Mr. Allison had taken some chips and partially dissolved them in carbon tetrachloride and the resulting odor was characteristic of the acrid odor given off by vinyl resins. This odor was supposedly causing the trouble.

Explained to the above mentioned gentlemen that our VS-1310 formulation was approximately 95-97% straight vinyl chloride in vinyl acetate copolymer resins, 1-2% tin stabilizer, blue toner and possibly a very small percentage of a lubricant. Pointed out that the characteristic vinyl odor which they thought might have caused the trouble was quite evident in all four fabricating operations and that the mill man particularly would be subject to this odor continuously during his shift. To the best of my knowledge, we have never had any problems of sickness due to this odor but all of our equipment was ventilated. Mr. Allison and Mr. Kirk seemed to be familiar with the various chemical properties of all the materials used in the VS-1310 formulation and were of the opinion that none of them would be harmful. They plan on checking with Virginia Plak to obtain the formulation of the vinyl coatings used on these sheets to see if possibly this could have caused the trouble. Made the suggestion that this problem could be alleviated by shooting

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NAME Material LabsBY L. D. Burnett, Jr.

ADDRESS _____

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a jut of air on the disks when it was machined, but they were of the opinion that the amount of work to be done on this type of material would hardly justify equipment changes.

My last conversation on this visit was with Dr. Gorman who was the head of the Naval Dispensary. He was of the opinion that this reported sickness might well be psychological. He stated that generally any worker who became ill while working in the ship yards would report very quickly to the Dispensary. In this particular case, none of the workers reported in to him. He thought that possibly they had gone to a private doctor and the problem had been diagnosed as caused by the plastic sheet since it was a material not previously handled in the machine shop.

Dr. Hallas

Mr. Hallas suggested that a copy of this report of call be sent to you for your comments. It is difficult to determine whether this complaint is authentic or possibly psychological as Dr. Gorman seemed to think. It is felt that it should be tracked down as much as possible in order that our "Vinylite" sheet stock will not get any black mark for Government applications.

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5/15/51

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