

PITTSBURGH CORNING CORPORATION

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT

U-535

E. A. Spardy

Walter P. Sinclair

Asbestos Health Hazard

Jan. 6, 1969

Dear Ernie:

Attached is a copy of the article which we discussed during our recent telephone conversation, entitled "U.S. Warned of Asbestos Peril", published in Dec. 4, 1968 edition of The Washington Post.

Paragraph 2 and 3 of the article blast the Navy, the Labor Department and the Public Health Service for not making public acknowledgement of the warning they were given in September by New York Mount Sinai Hospital, where autopsies have shown that most men who worked in shipyards had excessive asbestos fibers in their lungs, a condition that often leads to serious lung disease.

In view of the above and other statements in the Article, RADM. J. J. Stilwell, Deputy Commander Shipyard Management, NSSC Code 07, on Dec. 4, telephonically requested information and comment from Capt. W. Riblett, Head Ship Systems and Engineering Department NAVSEC Code 6100. The job of preparing a memo., complying with RADM. Stilwell's request was assigned to A. Munkres, Marine Engineer, Piping Components and Instrument Section, Auxillary Equipment Branch, NAVSEC Code 6153, for collaboration with E. Cherowbrier, Chemical Engineer, Biological Warfare Defense and Hazard Material Section, Material Development and Application Office, NAVSEC Code 6101. The memo. has been completed, approved by Capt. Riblett and forwarded to RADM. Stilwell.

During a conference with A. Munkres, he stated that although precaution is being exercised by the Navy, he proposes information be obtained from the Navy Yards, private shipyards performing Navy work, Public Health Service and manufacturers on the precaution measured employed in the handling, use and manufacture of asbestos products. He also referred to a statement by Dr. Irving Selikoff, New York Mount Sinai Hospital in Oct. - Nov. 1968 J.M. News Pic that, "Asbestos health hazard is a problem but it can be removed". Reference is also made in the same edition of the News Pic, that \$362,500 has been budgeted jointly by J.M., and International Heat and Frost Insulators and Asbestos workers for financing research of the problem at New York Mount Sinai Hospital.

During a conference with E. Cherowbrier, he referred to a survey of the uses of asbestos in shipbuilding, disclosed that the material is used primarily in two areas. The first for packing gaskets and the second for piping lagging and boiler insulation. For a health view point, the second area is considered to be more important. According to Cherowbrier, probably the greatest asbestos health hazard occurs by air borne particles of the material during "rip-out" operations,

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especially on ships built during and shortly after World War II, when asbestos was widely used. Although respirators are specified for personnel engaged in these operations, overall control of the dust problem is extremely difficult, other personnel in the immediate vicinity may be exposed.

Cherowbrier contacted and discussed the problem with the Industrial Hygienist at Mare Island and Puget Sound Naval Shipyards. The Yards were aware of the hazards of asbestos and as in the case of most, if not all Navy shipyards, appropriate safety precautions are exercised.

To further minimize the health hazard, associated with asbestos, Cherowbrier proposed that precaution measures be observed in the handling and the use of the material with emphasis on "rip-out" operations, be included in Chapter 9390 Thermal Insulation of NAVSHIPS Technical Manual. Also, insure that proper documentation is made available and is utilized by the shipyards.

In addition to conferences with Munkres and Cherowbrier, I also contacted Capt. Riblett, Capt. C. Tedholm, Director Machinery Systems Division, NAVSEC Code 6140 and called Capt. A. Bodnaruk, Commanding Officer Naval Ships Research and Development Center, Annapolis, Md. It is the definite opinion of each of these gentlemen that appropriate safety precaution is being exercised by the Navy Yards, in the handling and use of asbestos products and the articles published in The Washington Post during Dec. 1967 and Dec. 1968 exaggerate the problem. Capt. Riblett, however was somewhat apprehensive about the health hazardous conditions caused by air-borne asbestos particles during "rip-out" operations of asbestos materials from old ships.

Sincerely,



Walter P. Sinclair

WPS/is

cc: R. E. Fuhs ✓

JAN 10 1969

R.E.F.		
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