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1974 OSHA minutes

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PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

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The Bell System and Occupational Health Standards

When the Act known as OSHA 70 was passed, many people predicted that the long term and most significant aspects of the Act would be in the area of health standards. The prediction is beginning to take on new meaning in the Bell System.

Many Bell System people felt that OSHA would not impact on us for a number of years because it was generally felt that we were ahead of the rest of industry in safety and health matters. While we may be ahead of the rest of the industry, injury and illness rates indicate this is true. OSHA is beginning to affect us with some regularity.

Two health standards in effect now are the asbestos and carcinogen standards. We know that asbestos has been used in these situations in Bell System Companies:

1. As an insulation and fire repellent on some exposed metal beams in buildings.
2. As a covering for cable slots between floors of central offices.
3. As a covering or installation for some pipes in buildings.

Provisions of the asbestos standard requires annual medical exams for employees exposed to any concentration of airborne asbestos fibers. It also limits the number of fibers that an employee can be exposed to in the work environment.

To meet this standard, we will have to make tests in Bell System environments that have asbestos exposures and determine if alternative materials are available or if exposure can be eliminated.

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The two examples of existing standards (asbestos and carcinogens), and three examples of proposed standards (noise, carbon monoxide, and heat) reveal a number of important aspects in working with OSHA Health Standards. It is apparent that new subsystems of administration and control will be required to implement these standards. Substantial interface will be required between Medical, Engineering, and Plant to address this problem. The procedures will require considerable time, effort, and manpower to develop, implement and maintain.

For example, we must require that each piece of equipment (like a translator) or each product (the System itself like an "ITT spec drill") be tested and information obtained on its noise characteristics as related to variable work surroundings.

The Occupational Safety and Health can formulate Bell System resolutions on proposed OSHA Health Standards but will have difficulty implementing standards, once promulgated, into system practices and procedures. The implementation of health standards will require major effort on the part of Engineering and Plant Operations in issuing appropriate letters and Bell System Practices.

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The year 1974 will be different than previous years in Health Standards activity because this year will end with a number of health standards as law that will impact the System significantly. To meet the OSHA health challenge in 1974, we must be well organized with adequate resources.

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