

CHEMICALS



NOV 28 1973

INTEROFFICE / LAKE CHARLES

TO A. T. Raetzsch

DATE November 27, 1973

FROM W. B. Graybill

SUBJECT Asbestos - October 29, 1973
Issue of "New Yorker"

The significance of this first article is that (1) we had better be sure what we are doing on asbestos-in-air assessment. Dr. Grant was cited for many years of errors he made in the Tyler, Texas, Pittsburgh-Corning plant where asbestos was used.

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Asbestos inhalation causes lung cancer, asbestosis, malignant mesothelioma (fatal tumor of membrane encasing lung or of similar membrane lining abdominal cavity) and gastro-intestinal cancers. Asbestos has been proven to be a potent carcinogen. (It's listed by EPA along with mercury and beryllium as toxic and we had to obtain a Federal permit for asbestos for the new Cl₂ expansion.)

Asbestosis symptoms are scarring of lungs caused by inhalation of asbestos fibers-- which is a significant illness by almost any standard, in that it is irreversible, untreatable, often disabling, and frequently fatal. Asbestos-induced cancers generally take at least 20 years to develop.

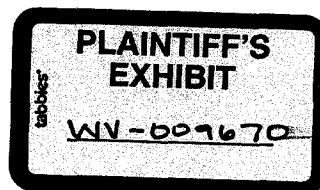
The other message to us is (2) that we had better keep attacking strongly the pigments dust problem even though it is not asbestos related in the sense that proven health hazards result (to my knowledge). We may be seeing only the tip of the iceberg.

I suggest the following moves:

1. Review all past and current test results on asbestos-in-air measurements. H. J. Hoenes has been asked to do this in conjunction with Murry Davis, even though the Lab has played only an analytical function on this for Murry to date.
2. Change some of the practices related to use of asbestos rope since even though test results are not in yet, visual observations say there may be a problem.

WBG:edh

cc: C. A. Burns
J. M. Davis/Dr. Lovejoy
H. J. Hoenes
D. L. Duncan



WBS

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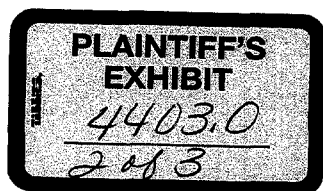
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SIGNIFICANT POINTS

October 29, 1973, Issue of New Yorker

- I. Some Non-Serious Violations
- II. Casualties of the Workplace

1. Asbestos inhalation causes lung cancer, asbestosis, and malignant mesothelioma (fatal tumor of membrane encasing lung or of similar membrane lining abdominal cavity). Also, gastro-intestinal cancers are expected.
2. Asbestosis symptoms are scarring of the lungs caused by inhalation of asbestos fibers--which is a significant illness by almost any standard, in that it is irreversible, untreatable, often disabling, and frequently fatal.
3. Asbestos has been proved to be a potent carcinogen.
4. A flurry of activity accompanied the recent (1972) closing of the Pittsburgh-Corning Corp., Tyler, Texas, factory. P-C had purchased it (had manufactured asbestos insulation) in 1962 to continue producing amosite-asbestos pipe covering. An intense clean-up of the factory ensued under scrutiny of Pinkerton guards. Sixty-two employees spent a week scraping asbestos waste from machinery and other equipment and burying truckload after truckload of asbestos scrap. Then four maintenance men spent two weeks washing down ceilings.
5. In 1963, P-C had misgivings about working conditions in plant and asked Industrial Hygiene Foundation of America to evaluate asbestos-dust hazard there. No mention of health hazard was made in the report; number of fibers found in general were well below threshold limit value of 5 mm particles/ft.³ of air.
 - a. Incredibly, the authors of the report had misread the TLV meaning; it means to apply to all particulate matter in the air not just asbestos fibers. A great error was made.
6. Then P-C acquired a new medical consultant--Dr. Lee B. Grant, a retired colonel, who had been Chief of Aerospace Medicine for USAF Logistics Command (1965).
 - a. He had Mr. Destefano measure levels in Tyler plant, and he found some high values but repeated previous error of knowing what TLV meant.
7. Asbestos was soon recognized as more than an industrial hazard. Anyone exposed to fibers from nearby dumps or from toys, etc. was being harmed.
8. It would seem highly probable that by 1967 any responsible industrial health officer would have questioned and given pause by such a report as issued by Destefano. A \$4,200 study proposal of the Tyler plant in more detail by Dr. George Hurst, Clinical Director of East Texas Chest Hospital, was turned down in favor of an occupational health study by Dr. Lewis J. Cralley of Cincinnati.

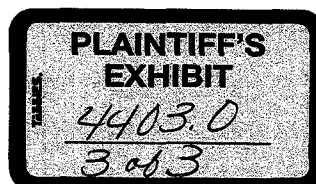


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9. All subsequent reports just reported fiber counts and no conclusions of bad working conditions were drawn.
10. After 1968, Dr. Grant forgot the study results completely. Meanwhile, the health situation at Tyler plant was going from bad to worse to appalling.
11. Standard changed to two fibers per CC to prevent asbestosis. However, a standard finally adopted was 12 fiber count (OSHA 1970).
12. Dr. Grant grossly minimized hazard of working with asbestos per Dr. Johnson.
13. Emergency standard of 5 fibers longer than 5 μ per CC of air adopted in 1970.
14. Tyler P-C plant was inspected by NIOSH in October 1971, to be found one "unholy mess". Men were handling asbestos as if it were hay. Dust coated everything. People were even eating watermelon in this environment. There was no respirator maintenance program.
15. Asbestos-induced cancers generally take at least 20 years to develop.
16. There are four criteria for asbestosis symptoms:
 - a. Rales
(Crackling sounds
in chest)
 - b. Finger clubbing
(Thickening of finger
tips)
 - c. Dyspnea
(Shortness of breath)
 - d. Marked reduction of forced vital capacity
17. NIOSH inspectors still listed Tyler findings under "non-serious" and fined them \$210.

WBG:edh



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