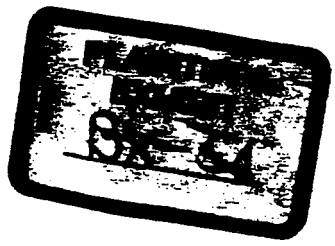
FILE NAME: Friction Materials Standards Institute (FMS)

DATE: 1976 Sept 27

DOC#: FMS049

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter to MOTOR Magazine from FMSI



September 27, 1976

MOTOR Magazine
1790 Broadway
New York, New York 10019

Attention: Mr. Robert J. Carullo

Dear Mr. Carullo:

This is to reply to your letter of September 20, 1976 concerning Dr. Selikoff's write-up in the Daily News.

In answer to the questions in your letter—yes, most brake linings on today's cars contain asbestos. The disc brake and drum brake linings used on most American passenger cars and trucks contain about 50-60% asbestos. The asbestos is "locked in" to a matrix of resin and other materials. The asbestos by itself is not free. The problem with asbestos occurs if a shop grinds and cuts brake lining segments without good dust collection systems. Also, there is a problemsduring the removal of old brake linings preparatory to a reline. During removal, dust from the brake system can be inhaled if a mechanic uses a air hose or other procedures that tend to raise dust in the shop. It had been common practice in brake shops to use air hoses to clean off brakes. It is not a good practice.

As regards your question concerning my reaction to Dr. Selikoff's remarks, I did not read the article fully. I did see the headlines in the New York Daily News. I am not a medical authority and am in no position to discuss epidemiological data on which Dr. Selikoff projected this high mortality for people repairing brakes. If those working with brakes in service centers are sufficiently alarmed by Dr. Selikoff's remarks to initiate good work practices in the shop, his remarks may be helpful. As regards the accuracy of his remarks, I don't believe I'm qualified to comment.

Along this line, I might suggest contacting the Asbestos Information Association, (AIA) 1835 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Because of the proposed OSHA amendments concerning asbestos in the workplace the AIA has undertaken costly consultant studies on the difficulties with the OSHA regulations and the medical evidence in support of the proposed amendments. While they may have data concerning the medical aspects of past occupational exposures to asbestos available, epidemiological data is not conclusive. There

is asbestos dust in the factories that manufacture friction materials. Off-hand, it might be assumed that past dosage and time effects of asbestos in the factories would have been more serious than sporadic high counts that might be present in brake shops. Most of the epidemiological studies on asbestos in the workplace have been done in the factories that introduce asbestos into products such as brake linings, floor tiles and construction materials. There is very little epidemiological data on brake service shops.

I'm enclosing some items that may be of help in your work. One is a 3 page write-up entitled, "Asbestos Dust Control in Brake Service Centers." The Friction Materials Standards Institute, with one of its members making the major contribution, has drafted these comments on good dust control in the brake service areas. We believe that with good house-keeping and good work practices that the asbestos dust problem can be essentially eliminated in the brake shop. I'm also enclosing a copy of an article that appeared in Brake and Front End Service in May 1976 concerning asbestos in the workplace and some of the recommended equipment that is being used to control it. I'm also enclosing a copy of a letter put out by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health dated August 8, 1975. This letter by Dr. William Lloyd of NIOSH discussed some of the problems in the brake shops and had some recommended procedures for asbestos brake and clutch servicing.

I hope the enclosures and comments are helpful to you concerning your article to appear in MOTOR Magazine. I'd be most pleased to receive a copy of your article when it is published.

Sincerely,

FRICTION MATERIALS STANDARDS INSTITUTE

EWD/lmc
Encs.

E. W. Drislane
Executive Director

P.S.: I am enclosing also a just-received page from a Raybestos-Manhattan catalog entitled: "Recommended Procedures for Reducing Asbestos Dust During Brake Servicing."