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Mr. L. W. Seeley - Toledo

Jon L. Konsen, M.D. - Toledo

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Mr. H. L. Barter - Toledo
Mr. Robert L. Logan - Toledo
Mr. Francis E. Edwards - Toledo

S & C WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION CLAIMS INVOLVING ALLEGED RESPIRATORY DISEASE.

This subject has been discussed before and I am sure that your department has issued a directive to all S&C Units to notify Toledo immediately when compensation claims allege respiratory problems. However, changes of personnel and the relative infrequency of such claims necessitate periodic reminders to assure compliance.

All state Workmen's Compensation regulations require that the employer be notified that a claim is being filed. Each S&C Unit, therefore, receives such notifications.

In the past few months we have received information about several claims months after the original filing date. In fact, two of these claims had reached the award stage before word was received here.

Most of these claims are for asbestosis and in many cases we should be able to show little or no responsibility for asbestos exposures. In a number of past cases, Fiberglas was named as a defendant because we were able to prove that the complainant had not handled asbestos-containing products during employment by us. In two other recent cases, both claimants withdrew their claims after thorough physical examinations by physicians of our choosing.

Because the incidence of asbestosis claims is increasing and because they are usually high-cost, it is advisable to use our best efforts to reduce them.

It will also be helpful if each Unit will note on all employees' job records whether or not he handled any asbestos-containing products on each job site.

I will appreciate your ideas and suggestions.

Jon L. Konsen, M.D.

JLK/dal