

REPORT OF CONTACT

Subject: EPA/CPSC/IRLG Information-Gathering Meeting
in Advance of Rule-Making
to Regulate the Usage of Asbestos

Date and Place: June 14-16, 1980
Washington, D.C.

Purpose

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has recommended to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) that the current asbestos exposure limit of 2 fibers per cubic centimeter (fibers/cc) be reduced to 0.1 fibers/cc in recognition of the carcinogenicity of asbestos fiber. This move is part of a coordinated effort to systematically remove asbestos from all materials where substitutes are available. The Interagency Regulatory Liason Group (IRLG) is seeking to unify the regulatory efforts of OSHA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in determining the state of the art in cost effective asbestos substitutes which do not impose the long-term potential health hazards characteristic of asbestos fiber.

The meeting consisted of presentations and roundtable discussions among representatives of the asbestos industry, government regulatory officials, asbestos substitute material vendors and their technical representatives, and members of those industries who are present consumers of asbestos containing materials.

Specific Applications

While Manufacturing Staff has been designated to evaluate the cost-effective asbestos-substitute materials presently available for Companywide applications, one current specific interest involves the use of asbestos-cement (A/C) sheet for building construction.

The available substitutes for A/C sheet include: glass-reinforced concrete (GRC); cement/wood board; cement-based materials using reinforcing fibers made from mineralized wood, steel, mineral wool, carbon, nylon, or ceramics. Tables I and II list the unit costs associated with currently available substitutes.

TABLE I - COMPARISON OF CEMENT SHEET PRODUCT PRICES

Product	Cost (\$) per square meter (square foot)	
	1/4"	1/2"
J. M. Flexboard (A/C)	5.90 (0.55)	14.00 (1.30)
J-M Transite (A/C)	13.15 (1.20)	21.50 (2.00)
Cement/wood board	1.95 (0.20)	4.00 (0.40)
High density GRC	-	8.61 (0.80)
Low density GRC	-	less than 8.60 (0.80)
Alumina-Sheet	161.40 (15.00)	-

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