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INSULATION HYGIENE PROGRESS REPORTS

FROM THE INSULATION INDUSTRY HYGIENE RESEARCH PROGRAM

Irving J. Selkoff, M.D., Program Director

Vol. 5, No. 1

Spring 1973

Asbestos Standard has Little Effect

Conditions in the asbestos insulation industry have changed little since the promulgation of the Asbestos Standard on June 7, 1972. This is the conclusion from a preliminary analysis of the data in a survey of all Asbestos Workers on environmental conditions in their work.

Although the standard required that at least one dust count be done by each employer during the first six months following the issuance of the standard, fewer than 5% of workmen saw such a count.

These results included dust counts made under the auspices of the employers and also those by state or federal officials. In fact, a large fraction of those dust counts were in Navy shipyards which have permanent industrial hygiene departments.

Procedures Not Followed

In order to reduce dust concentrations below the established Threshold Limit Value of 5 fibers (longer than 5 microns) per milliliter of air, certain procedures were listed in the standard. These included the use of plastic bags for mixing cement, vacuum cleaning of asbestos debris, the use of containers for waste material disposal, and exhaust ventilation on power equipment.

Over one-half of the replies stated that none of these items were usually available on job sites; approximately one-third stated "all were never available." In nearly fifty percent of the replies change rooms were listed as unavailable so that dust laden clothes were taken home by many workmen to possibly contaminate their households.

The replies represented observations on over 900 employers and thousands

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Roy Steinfurth (right), Director of the Health Hazard Program of the Asbestos Workers discusses the statistical work of the American Cancer Society concerning asbestos insulation workers with Herbert Seidman, chief statistical analyst of the A. C. S.

Asbestos Workers Health Hazard Program Begins

Roy Steinfurth, formerly Business Agent of Local 45, Toledo, has been selected by General President Haas to direct the Health Hazard Program of the IAHFIAW. This program was developed by the Asbestos Workers at their convention last September and is being funded by a one cent per hour assessment on each member's wages.

All Aspects of Health

The new program will be concerned with all aspects of asbestos health problems, support of clinical and laboratory research, implementation of asbestos dust control technology, educational programs for workmen, and adequate compensation for asbestos disease.

This last issue assumes special importance at this time. Procedures, materials, and control equipment have been identified that can reduce dust exposures in insulation work to one-tenth that which existed in the past. This existing technology, additional engineering controls to be developed,

and the use of appropriate respirators in dusty work will substantially reduce the health risk of workmen now entering the insulation trade.

It is equally important, however, to assure that those now in insulation work or who have retired and have been disabled by the dust exposures of 20, 30, or more years ago be adequately treated for their disease and compensated for their disability.

Mixed Picture

At this time the compensation picture is very mixed. A few states have laws that provide reasonable compensation for damage to health caused by asbestos or other dusts. However, in some states compensation for dust diseases is virtually non-existent and in others totally inadequate.

New York, for example, will allow payment in pneumoconiosis diseases (including asbestosis) only for total disability.

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PURPOSES OF THE INSULATION INDUSTRY HYGIENE RESEARCH PROGRAM

1. To develop improved methods for minimizing exposure of insulation workers to dusts and fumes encountered in their work.
2. To disseminate knowledge of these improved methods of dust control wherever they may be applied advantageously and to offer cooperation, advice and assistance toward their universal adoption.

Asbestos Standard has Little Effect

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of job sites and demonstrate that much is yet to be done before safe work conditions prevail on construction sites.

The complete results of the survey with a detailed statistical analysis will be published in the next issue of Insulation Hygiene Progress Reports.

Compensation an Important Issue

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Similar problems existed in the coal mining industry and were solved by the passage of the "Black Lung Law" in which the Federal Government, through the Social Security Administration, assumed the compensation responsibility for all coal mine workers.

Mr. Steinfurth spent the first week in his new position with International Vice-President Jack Novak visiting Mount Sinai School of Medicine and the American Cancer Society where all aspects of the various asbestos research programs were reviewed.

Arrangements have been made for Mr. Steinfurth, Mr. Novak, and Duncan Holaday of Mount Sinai's Environmental Science Laboratory to visit individuals in the AFL-CIO headquarters concerned with health matters and all government departments and facilities that may be involved with asbestos health problems, including, especially, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the Department of Labor and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

In discussing his new position, Steinfurth said, "Solving the health problems of asbestos workers is such an important task. I'm pleased to be part of that effort and look forward to working with all insulators across the country to solve our health problems."

Hazard Evaluation Available

Regulations for conducting job health hazard evaluations have been published by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in the November 7 issue of the *Federal Register*.

NIOSH carries out evaluations of potentially toxic substances in the workplace at the request of employers or of representatives of employees in establishments covered by the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Such a representative may be a union officer, a collective bargaining representative, an employee having written authorization from at least two other employees who work in the area where the toxic substance is found, or a single employee in those establishments employing three or fewer employees.

Copies of all final reports of health hazard determinations will be forwarded to the Department of Labor and to the appropriate state agency, as well as to the requesting parties. Each determination will state the concentration of the toxic substances found, whether such concentrations can produce toxic effects, and the basis for such judgments.

Because a wide variety of possibly toxic chemicals and adhesives are now used by insulators, we are publishing a copy of the form on which a health hazard evaluation can be requested from NIOSH.

SIX INSULATORS DIE IN ACCIDENT

On December 15, 1972 six members of Local 2, Pittsburgh, were killed in a coke oven gas explosion in Weirton, West Virginia. Paul E. Byrne, George M. Crowley, Russell J. Ober, Michael R. Repko, Albert R. Tuttle, and James R. Tuttle were applying insulation to pipe at the coke oven battery when the accident occurred.

Because of the large number of deaths from asbestos dust diseases in insulation work, accidental deaths are often overlooked. In his report before the delegates to the National Convention, Dr. Irving J. Selikoff pointed out that over 1% of all deaths of insulators are from work accidents. Moreover, for every accident causing death there are many more involving serious physical injury.

The terrible event in Pittsburgh and accidental deaths elsewhere dramatize that Asbestos Workers, industry safety officers, and government officials should be conscious of occupational safety, as well as health in insulation work. One cannot be too careful on the job site.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

REQUEST FOR HEALTH HAZARD EVALUATION

This form is provided to assist in registering a request for a health hazard evaluation with the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as provided in Section 20(a)(6) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and 42 CFR Part 85. (See Statement of Authority on Reverse Side).

Name of Establishment Where Alleged Hazard(s) Exist _____

Company { Street _____ Telephone _____
Address { City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

1. Principal Company Activity _____
(manufacturing, construction, transportation, services, etc.)

2. Specify the particular building or worksite where the alleged hazard is located, including address _____

3. Specify the name and phone number of employer's agent(s) in charge. _____

4. Describe briefly the hazard(s) which exists by completing the following information:

Identification of Hazard or Toxic Substance(s) _____

Trade Name (if Applicable) _____ Chemical Name _____

Manufacturer _____ Does the material have a warning label? _____ Yes _____ No

If Yes, attach copy of label or a copy of the information contained on the label.

Physical Form: Dust ☐ Gas ☐ Liquid ☐ Mist ☐ Other ☐

Type of Exposure? Breathing ☐ Swallowing ☐ Skin Contact ☐

Number of People Exposed _____ Length of Exposure (Hours/Day) _____

Occupations of Exposed Employees _____

5. Using the space below describe further the nature of the conditions or circumstances which prompted this request and other relevant aspects which you may consider important, such as the nature of the illness or symptoms of exposure, the concern for the potentially toxic effects of a new chemical substance introduced into the workplace, etc.

6. (a) To your knowledge has this hazard been considered previously by any Government agency? _____
(b) If so, give the name and address of each.

(c) and, the approximate date it was so considered. _____

7. (a) Is this request, or a request alleging a similar hazard, being filed with any other Government agency? _____ (b) If so, give the name and address of each.

The undersigned (check one)

- ☐ Employer
☐ Authorized Representative of employees*

i ii iii (circle one)

believes that a substance (or substances) normally found at the following place of employment may have potentially toxic effects in the concentration used or found.

Signature _____ Date _____
Typed or Printed Name _____ Telephone: Home - _____
Address { Street _____ Business - _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

If you are a representative of employees, state the name and address of your organization.

Please indicate your desire:

- ☐ I do not want my name revealed to the employer.
☐ My name may be revealed to the employer.

Authority:

Section 20(a)(6) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, (29 U. S. C. 669(a)(6)) provides as follows: The Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare shall... determine following a written request by any employer or authorized representative of employees, specifying with reasonable particularity the grounds on which the request is made, whether any substance normally found in the place of employment has potentially toxic effects in such concentrations as used or found, and shall submit such determination both to employers and affected employees as soon as possible. If the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare determines that any substance is potentially toxic at the concentrations in which it is used or found in a place of employment, and such substance is not covered by an occupational safety or health standard promulgated under section 6, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare shall immediately submit such determination to the Secretary of Labor, together with all pertinent criteria.

* "Authorized representative of employees" means any person or organization meeting the conditions specified in 42 CFR Part 85.3 (b) (4) (i), (ii) or (iii):

(i) - that he is an authorized representative of, or an officer of the organization representing, the employees for purposes of collective bargaining; or

(ii) - that he is an employee of the employer and is authorized by two or more employees employed in the workplace where the substance is normally found, to represent them for purposes of the Act. Each such authorization shall be in writing and included in the request; or

(iii) - that he is one of three or less employees employed in the workplace where the substance is normally found.

Send the completed form to:

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
Hazard Evaluation Services Branch
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202