FILE NAME: Firestone (FIRE)

DATE: 1969 Apr 10

DOC#: FIRE021

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Dr. Ballou Memo to G.W. Aucott with Report on Decatur Plant [Ex. 852]

BC Notes: Dr. Ballou memo to Decatur plant transmits G. Wilson report raising concern over dust hazards and rubber worker claims for compensation for lung cancer from dusts

FILE

APRIL 10, 1969

MR. G. W. AUCOTT
DECATUR PLANT

DR. L. H. BALLOU

ATTACHED

Attached is Mr. George Wilson's report on the survey he made at your plant in March.

His first four recommendations deal with improvement of ventilation in several areas of your plant where you apparently have exposure to excessive dusts or fumes. Our old sense of security relative to "toxic" and "non-toxic" dust has been largely destroyed in recent years by the increasingly persuasive evidence that chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Emphysema, or dirty lung disease, can be brought on by general air pollution of innoxious materials.

The actual cause of C.O.P.D. is not yet known, but dirty air--whether it is due to dust or fume--is receiving the blame more and more frequently. Claims of exposures which occurred long before symptoms developed are being successfully made.

Both Goodyear and Uniroyal have had claims successfully made against them in Michigan and New York for emphysema or lung cancer due to earlier factory carbon black and general dust exposure. Dirty air conditions in any of our plants invite union complaints, investigations by State commissions, and eventual capitalization by unscrupulous medical-legal operators.

I strongly urge that you take the corrective measures needed to improve ventilation in the areas suggested by Mr. Wilson so as to prevent possible health hazards and minimize your later compensation vulnerability.

Mr. Wilson has added a dBA column to his noise survey statistics. This is a special type of overall noise reading that supposedly "listens to" and gives emphasis to the damaging frequencies. The revised Walsh-Healey regulation make reference to this type of measurement so it is wise to have our plants familiar with it when referring to their noisy areas. Walsh-Healey requires that we get our noise down to 85 dBA by 1971--rather a large order.

Please request the Medical Department to send me a report on their trials and tribulations in getting the Beltone fixed. In good faith we recommended that instrument but are finding that service is poor. I want facts and figures to use with Beltone's top management to see if we cannot retrieve the situation before we abandon the Beltone instrument for some other make.

MEDICAL DIRECTOR

LHB:rf
Attach. (2)
cc: Mr. T. I. Velock

Pltf Exh
852

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