FILE NAME: Packings and Gaskets (PAG)

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July 2, 1976

Mr. Wilfrid P. Howard
Group Public Relations Adviser
Turner & Newall Ltd.
77/79 Fountain St.
Manchester M-2 4EA England

Reference: Blue African Asbestos

Dear Wilfrid:

The Fluid Sealing Association is considering a move to ban the use of SAA within our industry. Flexitallic intends to actively support this motion. To aid us in this effort do you have any information concerning SAA specifically that could be made available (or reproduced) to us? Also, any comparisons between crocidolite and chrysotile would be helpful.

Any suggestions or help you can give us would be appreciated.

Yours very truly,

FLEXITALLIC GASKET COMPANY INC.

Tom C. Yarbrough
President

Call
23

0080 0083 0503

SHs/CMT

To: AAB
Copy: PJM/DCP/CM/DT/GD/DSD
Info: RSy

29th September, 1977.

British Gas Corporation

Arising from the meeting with representatives of the above on 22nd September, 1977, I promised to comment on the decision of British Gas to include CAF among asbestos-containing materials which must be replaced by alternatives by 1978.

I see no reason whatever to abandon the use of CAF on the grounds of it being a risk to health. The material is flexible, not friable, i.e. it cannot be broken like many other asbestos sheet materials, thereby releasing airborne fibres. The asbestos in CAF (always white, never blue) is so well bonded in the rubber matrix that there is no release of dust in normal handling and the sheets are so thin that there is little or no release of fibre during cutting or punching. The only situations where minimal measurable amounts of airborne fibre have been recorded have involved automatic high-speed punching of gaskets or washers from the sheet.

When the Asbestos Regulations, 1969 were being drafted, consideration was given at one stage to the inclusion of a list of asbestos-containing products which might be exempted from the provisions of the Regulations on the grounds that they presented no health hazard in handling and use. Because of the obvious difficulty in deciding where to draw the line, the idea was dropped, but a list was in fact drawn up by the Factory Inspectorate and CAF was at the top of this list.

By agreement between the Health & Safety Executive, the Department of Prices and Consumer Protection and the Asbestos Industry, a voluntary labelling scheme was introduced in October, 1976. Under this scheme, all products containing asbestos which could foreseeably constitute a health hazard in handling and use would carry a health warning label. CAF is one of the few products which, it has been agreed, do not need to carry this label.

S. Holmes.