

Asbestos Information Association/North America

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April 15, 1971

Miss Elsie Carper
THE WASHINGTON POST
1515 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Miss Carper:

Your April 2 story about Nader's group asking monitoring of asbestos contains a number of errors of fact which we would like to point out to you in hope that they can be avoided in future articles on asbestos.

The story states that a New York study showed that one out of five "asbestos workers" dies of lung disease. This is not correct. The study referred to a small group of insulation workers in the construction industry who are exposed to a number of substances in the course of their work. The classification of insulation workers as "asbestos workers" implies incorrectly that they work directly in asbestos mines or factories.

The story also notes an EPA statement that even slight exposure (to asbestos) may contribute to death or serious illness. Scientific studies of asbestos-related diseases indicate that they occur after heavy exposure over a long period of time and thus are confined to occupational settings where they can be controlled. There has been no demonstrated hazard to the general public.

The story also states that New York and Philadelphia have prohibited asbestos spray on construction sites. This is also incorrect, although both cities are considering such a ban.

Both the spray insulation industry and the asbestos industry support strict controls over the application of spray asbestos insulation. Proper controls can both protect the workers applying the material and prevent public exposure.

I am enclosing a file of factual background information which I hope will be of value to you when writing on the subject in the future. If you need additional information at any time, don't hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Bill

William P. Raines
Secretary

WPR:nml

Enclosure

cc: Eugene Patterson, Managing Editor

Sponsored by Certain-teed Products Corp., Flintkote Co., GAF Corp., Johns-Manville Corp., National Gypsum Co., Panacore Corp., Raybestos-Manhattan, Inc. and Woodward Corp., and operating from Hill and Knowlton, Inc., Public Relations Counsel

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