Chemical Marketing Reporter 7/15/74

BFG25634

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OSHA Proposed VCM Rule Too Stringent

Chemical industry witnesses last week warned that the proposed Occupational Safety & Health Administration standard covering the exposure of workers to vinyl chloride monomer is too stringent and will cause great economic consequences for the industry and its workers if adopted. The statements came from a long list of industry witnesses as the OSHA hearing in Washington continued into its second week.

John L. Nelson, vice-president of manufacturing for B.F. Goodrich Chemical Company, the industry's largest PVC maker with 930 million pounds of capacity at five plants, as well as a billion pounds of monomer capacity at Calvert City, Ky., told the hearing a no-detectable level of VCM in its operations is not technically feasible nor is full-time use of respiratory protection by workers.

He says the company will be forced to shut down its PVC and monomer operations if the standard is adopted. Goodrich, he says, has embarked on a multi-million-dollar program to generate new technology which might make possible further reductions in levels of vinyl chloride exposure.

The American Chemical Society, however, took issue with industry spokesmen and endorsed the "no detectable" standard. In a statement given by Dr. Stephen T. Quigley, ACS pointed out the lack of available data establishing a safe level of exposure to vinyl chloride and concluded that "even the potential threat of exposure to vinyl chloride justifies the adoption of the proposed standard."

Dr. Walter Harres of Uniroyal, Inc., representing the Rubber Manufacturers Association, said that "no prudent manufacturer, knowing that VCM is capable of causing cancer, will expose men at concentrations likely to cause harm."

However, he asked OSHA not to overlook our competitive system. A new criterion, he

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Drug Firms Move Their People About As Business Booms

Increasing employee transfers in the pharmaceutical industry, says a recent survey, have been made possible by better business conditions. In a nationwide Dun & Bradstreet study of relocation practices among major US corporations, the pharmaceutical industry reported one of the biggest gains in employee transfers, citing the most progressive relocation benefit programs of any of the twenty industries queried.

To get data on transfer trends and policies of US industry, D&B researchers surveyed 666 firms chosen from a listing of leading industrial and non-industrial corporations, including twelve pharmaceutical companies.

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Mineral, Oil Developments Spur Newfoundland Growth

Substantial increases in mining and off-shore drilling are expected to help boost Newfoundland's gross provincial product by 12.5 percent this year to $1.9 billion, according to a recent 46-page report entitled "The Economy – Newfoundland and Labrador Outlook – 1974."

According to the study, production of minerals this year should increase by 15 percent to $438 million, while expenditures for off-shore drilling should rise from $36 million to $40 million over last year's totals.

Noting that Labrador is rich in such minerals as iron ore, copper, lead, zinc, gold, silver, asbestos, fluorspar, gypsum and limestone, the report points out that production of iron ore increased by 38.5 percent in 1973 over the previous year's figure to a value of $325.8 million.

The economic review also notes that the new oil refinery at Come-By-Chance is now producing 100,000 barrels a day, while a second facility to produce 300,000 barrels a day is being planned.

Aiding growth of the province, according to the survey, is the Upper Churchill Falls hydro project, which has a capacity of 5,225,000 kilowatts annually. The provincial government is also evaluating the possibility of a second hydro project on the Lower Churchill Falls, which would cost about $1.2

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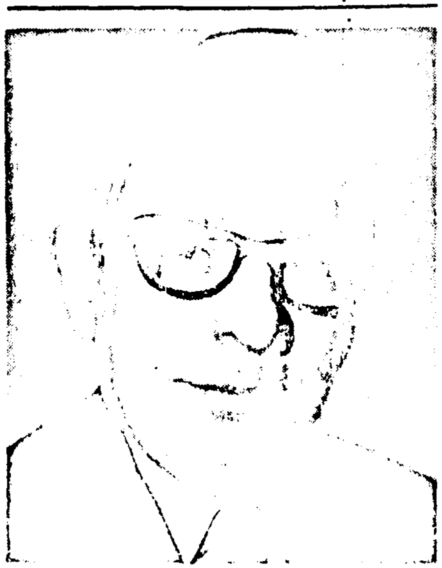

GAF EXECUTIVE: Ronald M. Schultz, controller-secretary of GAF (Canada) Ltd., who has been named vice-president and general manager of the Canadian subsidiary.

Ecodyne Contracts To Supply Equipment For Water Treatment

Ecodyne Ltd., in Canada, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ecodyne Corporation, has been awarded three contracts in excess of $5 million for water and wastewater-treatment equipment.

The Graver Water Division of Ecodyne, Ltd., received a contract for more than $2 million to provide a water-treatment system for a 100,000-barrel-a-day extraction refinery at Canada's Athabasca Tar Sands.

This water-treatment system, designed for Syncrude, a consortium of four oil companies – Imperial Oil, Ltd., Atlantic Richfield Canada, Ltd., Canada-Cities Service, Ltd., and Gulf Oil, Canada Ltd. – will reportedly incorporate one of the largest demineralizers ever built in North America. The tar sands facility is expected to be in operation by 1980.

The company's Unitech Division was given a contract for more than $2 million by Canadian International Paper Co. for the supply and erection of a black liquor evaporator used to concentrate liquids.

The evaporator, part of a $40 million expansion of CIP's La Tuque, Quebec mill is scheduled to come on line in late 1975.

Ecodyne, Ltd.'s other contract, in excess of $1 million was awarded by Stadler Hurter Ltd. of Montreal to supply equipment for the Gilan Forest Complex in Iran.

Marijuana a 'Hot Item' For the Fuel Shortage

Marijuana may become a "hot item" in the fuel shortage. Georgia-Pacific Corporation has just used the drug as "supplemental fuel" to make steam for its pulp, paper and chemical manufacturing complex in Bellingham, Wash.

Some 360 pounds of bundled marijuana and three vials of liquid hashish, all confiscated by West Coast police officers looking for a safe disposal site, were shoveled into G-P's firebox by Sheriff Bernie Reynolds of Whatcom county in four minutes.

That's $25,000 a minute for fuel, G-P officials computed, even though the sheriff worked at taxpayer expense.

The company is conducting "somewhat more realistic" experiments aimed at expanding fuel sources at various plant locations, including use of old auto tires and air-classified municipal garbage.

DOT Asks Changes In Polystyrene Rules

H lous Materials Regulations

Spanish Fertilizer Makers Well Placed

borax and trona.

Mr. Kliff contends that "because these products are commodities consumed in large volume by a few customers, captive production by end users is high and opportunities for profit are limited".

Those industrial minerals used mainly for their physical properties are specially tailored to the requirements of a variety of end uses for a diffuse group of customers. "Thus," concludes Mr. Kliff, "captive production is low and opportunities are relatively good."

Structural minerals are the largest group of minerals valued for their physical properties. They represent approximately 90 percent of the tonnage and 60 percent of the value of all industrial minerals .

Other major applications for the physical minerals are: extender and filler pigments for paper, paint, rubber, plastics and carpet backing; process aid is for the chemical, food, oil drilling, and iron ore industries; foundry molds; abrasives; gems, and electronics.

The importance of world trade is tied to the scattered locations of the higher valued industrial minerals. For example, says Mr. Kliff, the chemical mineral fluorspar is shipped in large tonnages from Mexico, Thailand and South Africa to such highly industrialized countries as the US and Japan.

Similarly, kaolin, the leading extender and filler pigment, is shipped from Great Britain and the US to Europe, Japan, Canada and other advanced countries.

Mr. Kliff predicts increased activity in industrial minerals by large multinational companies, on the scale of that already in practice by such firms as Johns-Manville and English China Clays.

OSHA Proposed Rule

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explained, has entered the marketplace and the energies of the large companies will be turned loose to solve the problem. He asked what is available to take the place of VCM and urged OSHA to keep the standard as simple as possible.

Richard P. Carter, director of government relations, environmental affairs, for Johns Manville, Inc., expressed concern about two distinct goals of the standard.

On the one hand, he said, there is the recognized necessity to protect workers exposed to potential hazardous amounts of VCM and on the other hand that PVC resin has become "a critical component in an enormous variety of products upon which a

world markets.

Additionally, the bank is lending some $70 million to Algeria to help finance construction of a new port at Bethiona for the export of liquefied natural gas to Europe and the US.

In the Far East, a loan of $35 million has been approved to help Pakistan expand fertilizer output. It will be used to help finance the $102 million expansion of the natural gas fertilizer factory at Multan in the Punjab.