

2/12/74

To: ALL ALGC EMPLOYEES

On January 24, 1974, a walk through survey of the Louisville plant was conducted by representatives of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the Kentucky Department of Labor, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) of the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

In a letter to Mr. George E. Best at the Manufacturing Chemists Association, Dr. Marcus M. Key, Assistant Surgeon General and Director of NIOSH, commended B.F. Goodrich Chemical Company for its "excellent cooperation with the survey team". He also said "the agreement of officials of the Louisville facility to provide continuing cooperation with the organizations participating in the survey, demonstrated the sincerity and concern of the B.F. Goodrich Chemical Company in determining the significance of past and present conditions of employment which may have precipitated or initiated the induction of tumors in certain of its employees". At another point in the letter Dr. Key said, "had not the company taken the initiative it did in following up the suspicions aroused by the occurrence of the rare type of liver cancer (i.e. angiosarcoma) discovered in several of its employees at autopsy, it is entirely possible that the significance presently attached to the appearance of those tumors would not have been realized for several more years".

Attached to the letter to the Manufacturing Chemists Association was a list of recommended work practices and monitoring procedures for the polymerization of vinyl chlorides to be initiated as interim measures. In looking at these recommendations with regard to their effect upon the operations of the ALGC plant, there are several points to bear in mind:

- (1) Some of the items recommended are already in effect here.
- (2) The recommendations are "preliminary" and subject to change when more "in depth" information is available, when new technology is



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developed, etc.

A copy of the recommendations are attached and although at this point they are only "recommendations" (not law), we expect to implement these items as quickly as possible. There are, however, a number of decisions that have to be made regarding the implementation and administration of some items. For instance, one of the recommendations calls for mandatory showers at the end of the shift for workers exposed to vinyl chloride or polyvinyl chloride. We must decide who this applies to and who it doesn't. Some of the recommendations require equipment that it will take some time to obtain,

Some of you will no doubt feel inconvenienced by some of the changes that are made, but please remember that these are measures which have been recommended by some of our nation's leading medical authorities. The changes will be for your benefit. Also keep in mind that we will be increasing our efforts to improve our technology with the objective of reducing exposure to vinyl chloride.

It is never easy when we are asked to change practices that have existed for years, but with your help, cooperation, and positive attitudes, I am sure we can get the job done.

R. N. Rylands



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