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Goodrich employe dies of chemical-linked cancer

By MIKIE SHERMAN

Charles E. Arthur, 47, an employe of the B.F. Goodrich chemical plant in Avon Lake for the past 21 years, died last night at Elyria Memorial hospital, eight months after he was diagnosed as having angiosarcoma, a rare form of liver cancer.

The occurrence of angiosarcoma and other cancers has been associated with exposure to polyvinyl chlorides, which are made at the B.F. Goodrich plant here and at four other company facilities.

During his 21 years at the plant, Mr. Arthur had spent about 11 working with the polyvinyl chlorides. More recently he had been working in the company's estol plasticizer and carbosol operations.

COMMENTING on her husband's illness last week, his wife Helen said, "He should be bitter but he's not. We hold no hard feelings against the company. Wherever you work there's something."

"When you know the Lord, bitterness leaves and you are filled with love," Mrs. Arthur added. She and her husband were active members of the Christian Assembly of God Church in Lorain, and Mr. Arthur was also a member of the Christian Businessmen's Fellowship and the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship.

Funeral services for Mr. Arthur will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the Reichlin Funeral Home, Elyria, with the Rev. Robert L. Newman, pastor of the Christian Assembly of God Church, officiating. Friends may visit at the funeral home from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. tomorrow. Burial will be in Brookdale Cemetery.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Arthur leaves four children: Valerie, 15, and Charles, 19, both at home; and two married daughters, Mrs. Albert (Denise) Perry, of Elyria, and Mrs. James (Karen) Long, of Lorain. His wife and members of the family were at the hospital when he died, at 6:36 p.m. yesterday.

BORN IN WEST VIRGINIA July 22, 1928, Mr. Arthur had lived in Elyria for the past 23 years. He was a veteran of the Korean War.

In June, workers at the B.F. Goodrich plant collected money to send Mr. and Mrs. Arthur and Valerie to Disney World, in Florida. Shortly after that trip, the family gathered to discuss and support Mr. Arthur's decision to discontinue chemotherapy treatment.

"We all feel very badly," a secretary at the B.F. Goodrich Co. said this morning, tears sounding in her voice. "He'd worked here for 20 years — we were his friends."

Since Mr. Arthur was diagnosed in March as having angiosarcoma, he had worked "sporadically" at the plant, according to company personnel director Ronald Cross. His last day of work was Sept. 23.

ACCORDING TO some reports, the incidence of cancer in polyvinyl chloride workers is 49 per cent higher than normal 10 years after

exposure to the chemical. After 15 years, the incidence is 84 per cent higher.

As recently as 1971, exposure levels were at 500 parts per million, according to a company spokesman. This has now been reduced to three parts per million, he said.

Although four workers at the B.F. Goodrich plant in Louisville, Ky., have died of liver cancer since 1968, Mr. Arthur's death is the first liver cancer death that has occurred among company workers in Avon Lake, according to Mr. Cross.

POLYVINYL CHLORIDES have also been associated with a high incidence of birth defects.

Other members of Mr. Arthur's family who survive are three grandchildren; a brother, Ophard, of Jefferson, O.; and two sisters, Mrs. Helen Lough, of Painesville, and Mrs. Wilma Cutlip, of West Virginia.



CHARLES ARTHUR

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