

PITTSBURGH CORNING CORPORATION

Robert E. Buckley

Roy E. Fuhs

Health Hazard File

February 5, 1968

Dear Bob:

The following is a quote from the "Industrial Insulator," January, 1968:

"Asbestos workers who smoke cigarets have a ninetyfold greater risk of dying of lung cancer than persons who neither smoke nor work around asbestos, three New York medical researchers said.

The extremely high risk of lung cancer among persons exposed to the combination of asbestos dust and cigaret smoke was uncovered in a study of 370 members of the Newark, N. J., and New York locals of the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Asbestos Workers union. The men are primarily involved in installing asbestos insulation in construction work.

The workers were exposed to a greater amount of asbestos dust than the general population, and all had been occupationally exposed to it for at least 20 years. But the researchers added that the general population, particularly in big-city areas, is exposed to a slight amount of such particles. As a result, they said, it is important to determine whether cigaret smoking makes this light exposure more hazardous than it would be otherwise.

In a report to the scientific session of the American Medical Association's annual convention here, the researchers said there were 94 deaths among the insulation workers during a 52-month period. This, they calculated, was 46 more than would have been expected among a similar group of men who hadn't been chronically exposed to asbestos.

Most of the men who died--78--were cigaret smokers. And among the smokers, 24 died of lung cancer. No lung-cancer deaths occurred among those who didn't smoke.

Twenty-four lung-cancer deaths was an extremely high rate, the researchers calculated. Among a similar group of smokers who hadn't been exposed to asbestos, statisticians would expect only about three deaths from lung cancer, they said.

'If they had neither smoked no been exposed to asbestos dust,' they said, the expected number of lung-cancer deaths would have been one or none during the 52-month period.

'All people incur a great increase in risk of lung cancer if they smoke cigarets; for asbestos workers the increase in risk is tremendous,' they said. The researchers noted that microscopic asbestos fibers, once inhaled, remain permanently in the lung tissues. As a result, 'asbestos workers who don't smoke cigarets should never begin. Those who do smoke should stop immediately.'

ASBURY CORNING CORPORATION

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Also from the same issue:

"The United States Public Health Service has called a special seminar on Personal Respiratory Protection for Asbestos Workers. The seminar will be held at the National Center for Urban and Industrial Health in Cincinnati, February 6, 1968."

Very truly yours,

Roy E. Fuhs

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