

Interoffice Communication

To Distribution

From J. J. Hall

Date March 25, 1980

Subject OSHA CONFERENCE TO REEVALUATE THE TOXICITY OF VINYL CHLORIDE
AND POLYVINYL CHLORIDE - MARCH 20-21, 1980

This two day conference was put together by Dr. Peter Infante of OSHA, to "update their files" on the toxicity of VCM and PVC. Thirty-nine speakers presented papers, two were from industry. No data were presented that were not already published in the literature.

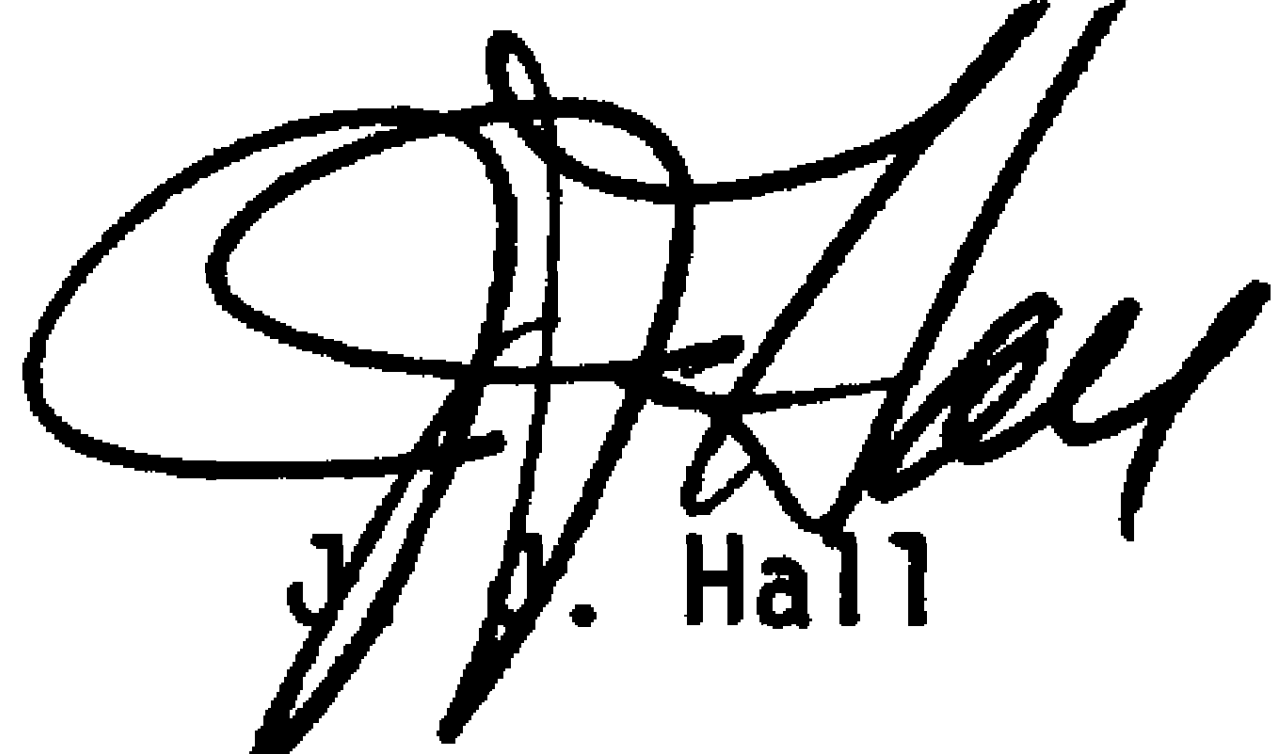
The most significant information presented was evidence that respirable PVC dust can cause reduced pulmonary function and chest x-ray changes in exposed individuals. Current evidence indicates that these changes are minor. Their mechanism is not understood. Nor is it known whether these changes will cause either disability or premature death. But it was a general consensus that PVC dust, in the respirable range, can no longer be considered an "inert" or "nuisance" dust.

Significance to Conoco Chemicals

This new finding on PVC dust should have little impact on Conoco Chemicals if we respond properly. It is important to note that PVC dust can only exert its effect on the lungs if it is of respirable size (generally considered to be less than 20 microns in diameter). Fortunately, suspension resin particles tend to be large enough to not be respirable.

Recommendations

1. Exposure levels to PVC dust in Conoco's plants should be documented.
2. We should attempt to determine what portion, (hopefully none) of our resin is in the respirable range.



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