

FILE NAME: Rogers Corporation (ROG)

DATE: 1976 Mar 11

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter RE Use of Asbestos with Samples

*File
Arbiter*

March 11, 1976

Mr. Charles F. Reilly
17 Lockwood Drive
Clinton, Connecticut 06413

Dear Charlie:

The following comments are in answer to your questions concerning our experience in using asbestos, and the safety and health precautions we have taken for the protection of our UPIU member employees who must work with and around asbestos.

Rogers Corporation has always taken steps to protect its employees against known safety or health hazards. In the case of asbestos, although we have used it in our Manchester, Connecticut plant (Local #1654) since 1936 in Matrix and since 1951 in molding materials, and in our Rogers, Connecticut plant (Local #46) since 1951 in gasketing (GP Duroids), we were not aware of any potentially serious health hazard from our use of this material until 1972. At that time we instituted a program of annual medical exams; air samplings on a regular basis; employee training; mandatory use of approved personal protective equipment as required; personal sanitation procedures; warning signs at appropriate locations; engineered changes in plant, equipment and process which reduce employee exposure to asbestos; and a team of engineering and personnel department specialists assigned the major responsibility for fostering and monitoring the entire program.

The information below will amplify the above-listed items, as well as answer other questions you raised:

1. Engineered changes in plant, equipment, and process

Since 1972, we have spent in the range of \$200,000 in plant, process, and equipment improvements designed specifically to reduce employee exposure to asbestos at our Manchester, Connecticut and Rogers, Connecticut plants. In addition we have found it feasible to convert much of our manufacturing process at the Rogers plant to the use of asbestos packed in pulpable bags in order to further reduce air-borne asbestos in those operations. We are continuing to work steadfastly to engineer further improvements into our equipment and processes in order to meet the stricter OSHA standards, 2.0 Fibers/CC, which are to go into effect July 1, 1976. The even more stringent standard (0.5 Fibers/CC) being discussed would present major engineering and cost problems for us in complying. Engineering work is presently being conducted to enable us to attempt to comply if that standard is adopted.

Lagerberg 00373

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2. Air Samplings

The results of the most recent one and two hour air samplings at each of the operations at the Manchester plant and at the Rogers plant are attached. All of these reported samples were run between one and two hours except in the Beater Room, where the short processing time limited sampling time to 15 minutes. The analysis of samples is by York Research Laboratories, an independent laboratory.

3. Medical Exams

We have been giving annual respiratory system medical exams to all employees with potential exposure to concentrations of airborne asbestos since 1972. In addition we have allowed employees who are not presently exposed, but who were exposed in the past, to participate in the medical exam program. These exams are conducted under the auspices of the Lung Research Center of the Yale University Medical School, with the results being reported only to the employee's private physician. However, the Lung Research Center has informed us that they have not discovered a single work related medical problem in any of these employees.

The Lung Research Center is authorized by OSHA to retain the employee's records in accord with the OSHA asbestos standard.

4. Work Clothes, Change Rooms, and Showers (Personal Sanitation Procedures)

In Manchester the employees are provided work clothes, change rooms, showers, and separate lockers for their work clothes and street clothes. The dirty work clothes are stored in a closed container until picked up by the laundry. This procedure is in the process of being established at Rogers, although we do not exceed the current asbestos standard and are, therefore, not required to establish such a procedure.

5. Personal Protective Equipment

In the few operations where there is a fair possibility of airborne asbestos exposure momentarily exceeding OSHA specified levels, we require employees to wear approved personal protective respiratory devices as provided by the Company.

6. Labels and Warning Signs

Labels are used and warning signs are in place in accordance with OSHA regulations.

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7. Number of Employees

The number of employees, by shift, in the regulated areas is:

	<u>Manchester (Local 1554)</u>	<u>Rogers (Local 45)</u>
1st --	29	6
2nd --	17	5
3rd --	4	4

8. In Manchester, Connecticut, the products in which asbestos is used are: Matrix and various Molding Compounds. It is used in the following manner: Dry Blend into raw materials under exhaust hood in Molding Compounds and Matrix. It immediately becomes wet in the Matrix process. In Molding Compounds, it usually becomes bound into the product at an early stage of processing.

In Rogers, Connecticut, the product in which asbestos is used is: GP Duroids. It is used in the following manner: Pulvable Bags or Wet Blend.

Sincerely,

R. L. Smith
Vice President
Personnel

RLS:ed

Enclosures

cc: D. Renaud, Oak Lodge #46) Included air sample information which
T. Hobby, Maple Lodge #1554) applies to their location only.

M. L. Greenman
T. M. Johnston, Jr.
E. J. Sweeney
M. Kupsaw ✓

MOLDING MATERIALS DIVISION

(Manchester, Connecticut)

		<u>Fibers/CC</u>
Beater Room	11/6/75	0.75
Dryer-Slitter	11/6/75	0.01
Calender	11/6/75	0.75
Inspection	11/6/75	0.24
Small Blender	11/6/75	1.05
Large Blender	11/18/75	0.09
	"	3.00
	"	0.10
	"	4.07
735 Extruder	2/11/76	0.85
	"	3.74
Pre-Mix	1/20/76	0.61
Mill Operator	11/20/75	0.02
Final Blender	11/20/75	0.03
Screening & Grinding	11/20/75	0.04
Kneader	2/11/76	1.37
	"	2.22

FIBERLOYS DIVISION

(Rogers, Connecticut)

		<u>Fibers/CC</u>
Beater Room -- Pulper	2/9/76	1.18
	"	2.05
Inspection	2/9/76	0.30
Calender Feeder	2/9/76	0.10