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Asbestos

At the December 14, 1978 meeting of the Asbestos Work Group, Mr. Philip P. McGrath proposed that the Work Group go on record as recognizing that the six asbestos minerals (chrysotile, tremolite, amosite, actinolite, crocidolite, and anthophyllite) are carcinogens because they have been shown to cause increased rates of cancer in man and experimental animals. At a subsequent meeting of the Work Group on February 8, 1979, a memo was distributed that describes the issues Mr. McGrath wants to be considered by the Work Group. (copy attached).

The December 7, 1978 status report on Talc - Inhalation and Ingestion, prepared by Dr. Linda L. Taylor of my staff and transmitted by Mr. Taylor M. Quinn to Dr. Casola stated that the potential to produce cancer and other diseases by the ingestion of asbestos remains to be determined. This report is a summary update of the data on asbestos gathered since the last agency action concerning talc and asbestos (1975). Recent studies on asbestos ingestion were reviewed and it was determined that the question of carcinogenicity of asbestos upon ingestion remains to be resolved.

Attached is a copy of a memorandum Dr. Horwitz to you concerning references to be transmitted to you from Dr. Casola.

Please review these references and all other pertinent data regarding asbestos in order to determine whether we agree with the statement of McGrath that asbestos is a carcinogen - from the point of view of ingestion.

Additionally, review also from the point of view of supplementing or revising the status report on Talc - Inhalation and Ingestion.

Attachment

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