FILE NAME: DuPont (DUP)

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter to Dr. Allen Associates from William E. Neeld, Jr., M.D, Director of DuPont Medical Division, with Suggestion to Exclude the word "Asbestos" from X-Ray Reports

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT
DUP-947

E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company

CHAMBERS WORKS

November 5, 1980

Dr. Allen Associates
c/o Barbara Brown, R.N.
ERD - N-11400
Wilmington

Dear Dr. Allen:

From the earliest time that I saw your rubber stamp placed on the x-ray reading card of a Chambers Works' employee that high lighted that the chest x-ray changes being observed may be asbestos-related, it caused me a great deal of concern. The reason for the concern is not an absence of Chambers Works having a concern about the employee's health and wanting to know if anything is amiss but it is a concern that the singling out of the word "asbestos" may heighten the working community's awareness about past asbestos exposure to an unnecessary high level.

I am fully aware that you are concerned with malpractice and do not wish to be considered as negligent in overlooking an x-ray observation but the attitude of the working community in the U.S. is litigation oriented and each time any medical entity befalls them the initial posture is that the illness was caused by their occupation. I do not think actual statistics can support that but as long as it receives press headlines and is news worthy to make such allegations, this myth persists. I propose there is no need to help perpetuate it unnecessarily.

I have voiced my concern to many different groups within the Du Pont Co. Each listens politely. None have taken a positive step towards stopping it. However, my immediate supervisor suggested that I write to you and get your views. Should you concur with me, the C&P Dept. of Du Pont might then take some positive steps in appealing to Corporate Medical to have the stamp that you are currently using modified slightly. However, if you do not concur, the stamp will persist and with it the heightened sensitivity of the litigation-minded worker.

DUP 0936347

The stamp uses the words "could be due to previous exposure to asbestos or other irritant materials." I believe that the x-ray reading report would be just as complete if the statement excluded the words "asbestos or other." It would indicate there were x-ray changes. It would state the changes were possibly due to some irritant material. It would leave the determination of what that irritant material would be to an historical gathering by the inquiring physician. By this time, at least within the Du Pont Company, he should be well aware that irritant materials would include past exposure to asbestos and would consider that as he worked up the patient.

There is no intention to insult your intelligence but on scanning the appended list of substances which can cause a pneumoconiosis, it is rather obvious that asbestos is not the only substance in a worker's environment or even in his personal hobbies that could be a contributor in causing x-ray changes that might be associated with some irritant material.

I would appreciate your views in this matter and your consideration whether or not you believe eliminating the word "asbestos" from your x-ray reading report compromises you in any professional way.

William E. Neeld, Jr., M.D.
Director, Medical Division

WEN/saw
Attach.

CC: R. L. Wright

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