

52nd ALL-OHIO SAFETY CONGRESS & EXHIBIT

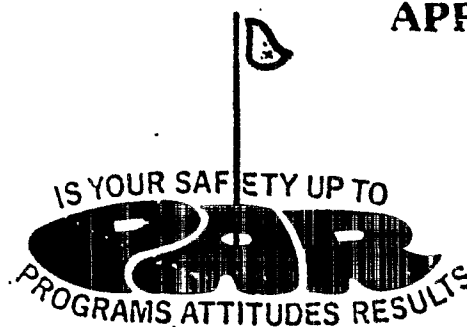
APRIL 20-22, 1982

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March 26, 1982

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Legal Section
Industrial Commission of Ohio
246 N. High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

O.D.# 179591
Clarence Allison
Middletown Development
and Supply
Middletown, Ohio 45042

Attn: Judy Spencer

Dear Ms. Spencer:

Company records indicate that the claimant was employed as an insulation installer from December 9, 1976 until April of 1981. The file, however, indicates his employment from September 13, 1977 through March 7, 1978. According to the company's payroll it appears that the claimant worked as is indicated in the file. The claimant's worksite was at Armco Steel in Middletown during his employment with Middletown Development and Supply Company.

As an insulation installer the claimant was required to remove existing insulation as well as install new insulation. Company representatives did indicate that the claimant was exposed to asbestos at the Armco Steel worksite. Although the file is not clear with regard to Mr. Allison's previous places of employment, it appears that he was employed by the insulation industry throughout his working career.

Due to the unique and useful properties of asbestos (heat and chemical resistant, high tensile strength and flexibility) it was used extensively in many industries including the insulation industry during most of the claimant's working lifetime. Therefore it is probable that he continuously encountered asbestos throughout his career.

Asbestos is a generic term applied to a number of hydrated silicates. It is known from a toxicological standpoint to be responsible for causing cancer of the lungs and digestive tract, mesothelioma and asbestosis. Exposures to asbestos, commonly associated with interstitial fibrosis, are often accompanied by pulmonary function changes. Pulmonary function changes considered most characteristic of asbestosis include a general reduction in lung volume, a decrease in pulmonary flow rates and impaired alveolar capillary diffusing capacity, which reduces oxygenation of arterial blood.¹

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The pneumoconioses that lead to diffuse interstitial fibrosis characteristic of asbestos exposures usually present the restrictive pattern of physiological impairment. In these the earliest impairments are those involving gas exchange and diffusing capacity and may be detected only during exercise. In the latter stages, gas exchange and diffusion abnormalities are detectable at rest too and are associated with a reduction in lung volumes.²

The threshold limit value (TLV) for asbestos was established to protect against asbestosis and reduce, to an acceptably low risk, the development of neoplasms.³ The current federal exposure limit for asbestos is 5 fibers, longer than 5 micrometers, per cubic centimeter of air (5 fibers /cc). The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH), however, recommend an airborne limit for chrysotile asbestos, the type most common in building materials, of 2 fibers/cc.

The information concerning the claimant's exposure to asbestos and his length of employment in the insulation industry is some what vague. However, a few brief comments can be made in relation to this claim.

According to NIOSH the development of asbestosis is a gradual process usually requiring a period of 10 to 30 years of exposure to significant airborne levels of asbestos fibers: However, very massive exposures may accelerate the development of the disease. Although it is not possible to determine the concentrations to which the claimant has been exposed, it is clear that exposure has occurred as a result of his occupation as an insulation installer. With the information at hand it is apparent that the claimant's greatest length of exposure, and his most critical with regard to the development of the disease, occurred prior to his employment with Middletown Development and Supply Company.

In summary the claimant, Clarence Allison, has been diagnosed as having asbestosis. The development of asbestosis is usually associated with chronic exposures to asbestos. Therefore the claimant's condition is most likely attributable to exposures accumulated during his working lifetime. As a result his 7 months of exposure, while employed by Middletown Development and Supply Company, may have had some contribution to his condition but was probably far less significant than earlier exposures.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Ashworth
Industrial Hygienist

MA/nh
References:

1. Levine, R. J., Asbestos; An Information Resource. DHEW, 1978
2. NIOSH, Occupational Diseases, A Guide to their Recognition. DHEW, 1977.
3. Proctor and Hughes, Chemical Hazards of the Workplace. J.B. Lippincott, 1978.