POTENTIALLY CARCINOGENIC SUBSTANCES

Asbestos

During the past several years, OSHA has reported evidence of a link between the inhalation of asbestos-containing dust and chronic respiratory disease (asbestosis), as well as several forms of cancer (Fig. 7). These include lung cancer, mesothelioma (cancer of the membranes lining the chest and abdominal cavities), and gastro-intestinal cancer.

The permissible exposure limit by OSHA is 2.0 fibers per cubic centimeter of ambient air. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), an advisory group in The Department of Health and Human Services (formerly HEW) has recommended to OSHA that limits be tightened to as low as 0.1 f/cc in 1980, (Fig. 8). Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology has issued bulletins detailing controls. An EPA ban, under the Toxic Substances Control Act, on all non-critical uses may occur as early as 1985.

Asbestos is found in a variety of automotive components, and thus many occupational exposures are possible. The most critical exposure occurs during brake and clutch repair. A small number of Ford employes are potentially exposed due to repair of vehicles, manufacturing equipment and plants.