

PARTICULATE MATTER IN AIR

Dust Breathed by the Employees While Cutting and Installing "Kaylo" Insulation

Plant-wide Survey - Plant 514

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Doctor Hull, Plant Medical Director, requested a plant-wide industrial hygiene study to determine the potential exposure of insulators to asbestos fiber dust concentrations. Table I gives the results of seven separate tests, including 24 breathing zone level air samples and shows an average dust concentration of 5.2 million particles per cubic foot of air. A "threshold limit value" of 20 mppcf of air has been suggested.¹

When three employees, or less, hand-cut and apply "Kaylo" insulation, the concentration of dust is considered safe from the health standpoint; however, with 6 men the dust count exceeds the TLV. It is at this phase of the operation that exhaust ventilation should be used. Excessive dust concentrations can be expected when the insulation is removed from piping and tanks. Again, exhaust ventilation should be used to move the dust away from the employees, if possible; otherwise, respirators are advised.

"Kaylo" insulation contains 12 to 13% asbestos and 5.6 to 7.4% crystalline-free silica.² This material is received in block and pipe form and the insulator measures and marks the material into appropriate sizes and cuts it with a hand saw. The insulation material is wired into position around the tank or pipe. The tasks of cutting and applying the "Kaylo" insulation are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

The air samples were collected with a midget impinger and a Uni-jet sampler, drawing 0.1 cubic foot of air per minute through impinger flasks containing 10 milliliters of distilled water. Dust counts, made by the Light Field Microscopic Counting Technique, appear in Table I.

This study has revealed that further research work is needed to:

1. Attain an established figure for the "threshold limit value"
2. Utilize exhaust ventilation to remove the dust from the work area.
3. Determine the particle size of the asbestos fiber where the dust count exceeds 5 mppcf.
4. Obtain Range Finding Tests on animals exposed to different percents of asbestos fiber.
5. Continue our plant-wide study in support of these conclusions.

1. Cook, Warren A., and Poole, Robert E., Letter dated February 12, 1962 - The University of Michigan School of Public Health.
2. Poole, R. E., Industrial Hygiene Survey - Construction Insulation Shop, Building 511-2019. Report 62-IH-1-G-1 (March 21, 1962).

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