FILE NAME: US Gypsum (USG)

DATE: October 11, 1968

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: 1968 Memo to CF Lehmann regarding asbestosis and article from The New Yorker

USG-88-1

002941

cc: J. N. Walker

CONFIDENTIAL

TO: C. F. Lehmann

FROM: B. W. Nies

October 11, 1968

SUBJECT: Asbestosis

Although the article beginning on page 117 of The New Yorker for Oct. 12 contains some obvious inaccuracies, it is sure to focus attention on the alleged or real health hazards relating to asbestos. As you know this is a very controversial subject, which has been simmering for a long time.

I think the most important point brought out in this article is that asbestos may not be so hazardous per se, but that it does tend to absorb and concentrate toxic substances ingested or inhaled. The evidence seems conclusive that the hazards of cigarette smoking are enormously intensified if there is also exposure to asbestos.

Several of the products we manufacture and sell (e.g., joint compound, siding, fireproofing, plaster) are generically implicated in this article. With this kind of publicity in an influential national magazine, it is imperative to make sure that we are taking all reasonable steps to discern and avoid hazardous situations, not only as a matter of ethical responsibility but to avoid direct or indirect liability. Perhaps Mr. Krug would wish to know of this publication, if he hasn't already seen it.

BWN:jmw BWN

Enc.

As you no doubt know we handle many varieties of asbestos and asbestos products here in The Lab.

Pls return magazine eventually

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UNITED STATES GYPSUM COMPANY

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