

file
August 2, 1974

BULLETIN

A records review by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in cooperation with B.F. Goodrich Chemical revealed yesterday that a man who worked at the Louisville plant from 1950 to 1954 died of angiosarcoma of the liver in 1969. He was 41-years old.

No information is presently available about the man's employment record before he joined Goodrich or for the 15 years after he left the company.

Although NIOSH is prepared to answer press inquiries about the case, the agency intends to withhold formal announcement until the cause of death is confirmed and a more complete work history is obtained. Working with NIOSH, BFG will follow the same procedure.

The case is the eighth involving the Louisville plant.

In another important development, it has been learned that Dr. Marcus M. Key, director of NIOSH and assistant surgeon general of the U.S., has resigned. No public announcement has been made as yet.

24082001

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TELECOPY

August 6, 1974

To: A. Vittone
From: John J. Bell
Subject: VINYL CHLORIDE SITUATION

1. The Wall Street Journal learned about the latest angiosarcoma case in Kentucky and asked NIOSH for further information, we are told. The Agency handled the inquiry as they told us they would. NIOSH reports no other press inquiries about the matter through August 5.
2. Hill and Knowlton's Washington office reports that EPA's vinyl chloride task force expects to issue its air, water and solid waste report about August 15.

v/w

cc: W. C. Becker
M. N. Johnson
C. Lane
R. W. Strassburg

24082002

Eighth liver-cancer victim from local plant discovered

By DENNIS POLITE

Louisville Times Staff Writer

The cause of death of a former worker at the B. F. Goodrich Chemical Co. plant here has been attributed to angiosarcoma, a rare cancer of the liver. The man, who died in 1969 at Ireland Army Hospital at Fort Knox, Ky., worked at the Goodrich plant from 1950 to 1954.

The Goodrich plant produces vinyl chloride. Exposure to vinyl chloride is thought to cause angiosarcoma. Seven workers at the Bells Lane plant have been diagnosed as having the cancer; five of the cases were discovered after the man died. Two men with the cancer are still alive.

24 other cases turn up

Since Goodrich announced in January of this year that it suspected exposure to the chemical was causing the cancer, a worldwide search has turned up 18 other cases, including some among workers who were exposed to by-products of vinyl chloride.

Goodrich officials said today the record on the eighth case is sketchy. They said they don't know what department the man worked in while he was at the facility.

The case was uncovered by federal investigators working on a study of all former Goodrich employees.

Richard Waxweiler, principal investigator on the project, said 5,200 persons who have worked at the plant have to be checked out.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health is conducting the study

of former Goodrich employees. Waxweiler said the death certificate of the man who died in 1969 lists the cause of death as angiosarcoma, and says the cancer had spread to the lungs.

He said the Communicable Disease Center would investigate the death further, including all autopsy records.

Both spokesmen for the job-safety institute and Goodrich said it was not known at this time where the man worked before or after his employment at Goodrich. He died at age 42.

Although the other workers had worked at the plant for between 12 and 29 years, the dead man's length of service of only four years, may lead to new theories on the amount of exposure that causes the cancer, Waxweiler said. He said the short period of work time at Goodrich makes the case "very interesting at this stage."

Government takes action

The discovery of the cancer-causing properties of the chemical, a gas, and its wide presence in various consumer products have led to several recent governmental actions.

The government standard on the allowable amount of exposure to workers was amended from 500 parts per million parts of air to 50 parts. A recommendation from the job-safety institute to the U. S. Labor Department to reduce the allowable exposure level to zero is under study.

Some aerosol products using the chemical have been taken off the market and

studies are under way to see if the vinyl chloride in polyvinyl chloride poses any danger to the public. Also, air studies around the plants have been made.

Vinyl chloride is used to produce polyvinyl chloride, a major ingredient in many plastics.

A spokesman at the Washington office of the job-safety institute said the latest discovery "is what I anticipated was going to happen."

He said that although other plants that produce vinyl chloride have not yet found as many cases as has the Louisville works, "It is too early in the game to say that one plant is going to produce any more than the other."

Dutch goof in Java: wrong trees planted for getting quinine

LIMA, Peru — For a long time, cinchona was widely used, sharply disputed and little understood.

This tree, from whose bark quinine was extracted, was not scientifically identified until the 18th century, and the principal chemical constituents were not isolated until the 19th.

Even then, drug dealers did not distinguish between efficacious cinchona species and those of little or no medical value.

When the Dutch established great cinchona plantations on Java in 1850, most of the million trees planted proved to be of the wrong variety.

Why do we say this, when we know damn well where he worked!!!?

2A08P003

Rare cancer blamed in death of sixth worker at Goodrich

A rare cancer, angiosarcoma of the liver, has been blamed for the death of a sixth person who worked for the D. F. Goodrich Chemical Co. plant in Louisville.

The plant produces polyvinyl chloride from vinyl chloride, exposure to which is believed to cause the cancer. Angiosarcoma has been diagnosed in seven other persons who worked at Goodrich's plant on Bella Lane, including five who have died.

The latest case, a man who worked at the plant from 1960 to 1964 and who died of angiosarcoma in 1968 at Ireland Army Hospital in Ft. Knox, was uncovered by federal investigators making a study of all former Goodrich employees.

Goodrich officials yesterday declined to identify the man.

The firm announced in January it

suspected exposure to vinyl chloride, a gas, was linked to the rare cancer. Since then, a worldwide search has uncovered 18 other cases, some of them among persons exposed to vinyl chloride by-products.

The particular survey that uncovered the latest angiosarcoma death is being conducted by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, and it is aimed at 3,200 persons who have worked at the Goodrich plant.

Richard Waxweiler, principal investigator on the study, noted that the latest victim worked at the plant only four years, while the other cases detected so far involved work histories of at least 12 years.

Neither Waxweiler nor the Goodrich spokesman were able to say where the latest victim worked before and after his employment by Goodrich.

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R. D. Scott
J. L. Nelson
E. W. Harrington
H. Waltemate
B. M. G. Zwicker
G. Pow
W. J. Wilcox ✓
P. J. Weaver
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E. B. Osborne
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R. D. Scott
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