

In the Netherlands all the waterworks mentioned are deal with ground water supply. No influence of asbestos containing serpentine can be expected in the Netherlands.

Fibre counting was complicated by the presence of a great number of other inorganic particles up to 50.000-100.000 for each asbestos fibre. The mean diameter and length of the asbestos particles detected by REM and TEM ranged from 0.2-0.3 μ m and 5-10 μ m.

Fibre counts in drinking water from AC mains detected by light microscopy at an enlargement of 50x ranged from not detectable to smaller than 10 fibres per litre. Fibre counts in tap water were always smaller than 1 fibre per litre and in general not detectable. At a magnification of 500 x fibre counts in water from the two mains amounted to 24×10^3 and 33×10^3 fibres per litre. Tap water supplied by the above mentioned mains contained 6×10^3 to 13×10^3 fibres per litre. Fibre counts by REM and TEM of the same samples resulted in respectively 60×10^3 and 85×10^3 , and 60×10^3 , and 240×10^3 fibres per litre.

Assuming that the above mentioned samples are representative for the Netherlands, asbestos fibre concentrations in mains and tap water are about 100×10^3 fibres per litre.

No investigations have been carried out as regards the source of the asbestos fibres but it is very likely that asbestos cement mains are the main contributors.

Conclusions

Very little quantitative information on the occurrence of asbestos in the ambient environment is at present available. The presented data were collected from U.S. publications - air and water; Canadian publications - water and beverages; U.K. publications - air; Dutch publications - water.

It is known that in several countries belonging to the European community, surveys of the occurrence of asbestos in ambient air are under way. From personal contacts it is known that the results of the determinations are in agreement with the preliminary results obtained in the Netherlands and the

R001 0754