

FRICION MATERIALS STANDARDS INSTITUTE, INC., E-210 ROUTE #4, PARAMUS, N.J. 07652

BULLETIN

N O. 6 3 3

November 14, 1978

REGULATORY ACTIONS CONCERNING ASBESTOS

Over the past several weeks the Institute has received correspondence concerning activity by Federal regulatory agencies as concerns asbestos. Some of these activities are described in this bulletin.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (OSHA) DIRECTIVE AS CONCERNS EXPOSURE AND MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

I have copied from an Asbestos Information Association "News and Notes" of October 31, 1978 concerning this subject. In essence, OSHA issued a directive to its Regional Administrators concerning compliance with the medical examination requirements of the standard. This is an attempt by OSHA to answer the question as to what consists of exposure to airborne concentrations of asbestos in the workplace. They are advising their Regional Administrators that concentrations of 0.1 asbestos fibers (or more) larger than 5 micrometers per cubic centimeter will be considered exposure to asbestos fibers. If these exposure levels are 0.1 or more, medical examinations are required.

You may wish to refer to the text as forwarded by the Asbestos Information Association.

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION (CPSC) MEMORANDUM CONCERNING ASBESTOS IN CONSUMER PRODUCTS

Mr. Jim Reis of Johns-Manville sent along a Consumer Product Safety Commission memorandum concerning asbestos. This report based its recommendations on the Kearney report which was made to identify consumer products containing asbestos. In the Kearney review of products it was their conclusion that friction materials containing asbestos are not likely to be considered a consumer product because they are not under the jurisdiction of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. This CPSC memorandum concentrated in the areas of bulk asbestos fiber and dry mix texture paints containing asbestos for consumer usage. This report also discussed exposure to asbestos from ceilings and other structural surfaces. Friction materials were not marked for further Consumer Product Safety Commission study.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) REVIEW ON ASBESTOS

The Environmental Protection Agency's office of toxic substances has concluded a lengthy report on asbestos. Their concern with asbestos is any area where asbestos usage could affect environmental exposure by air, water or food. Brake linings were mentioned several times in the report as regards air and water exposure. There was no new epidemiological data as concerned asbestos exposure to friction materials workers. There were references to brake lining wear being a source of asbestos in ambient urban air, and it mentioned possible exposures to individuals from asbestos-containing products in automotive supply stores.

November 14, 1978

Towards the end of the report there was a comment to the effect that if monitoring determines that asbestos fibers are emitted from brake linings in significant amounts that the Toxic Substances Control Act could be used to control the asbestos content of brake linings and to promote safer effective substitutes. It noted that an interim step could be to require under the TSCA that manufacturers report any research results on substitutes. This report is in excess of fifty pages and it is being distributed to the Asbestos Study Committee for their review. If a member were interested in a copy of the complete report the Institute would be pleased to send one on request.

The foregoing items are sent along as a matter of information to the Membership.

E. W. Drislane
Executive Director

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FMSI 03455