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March 11, 1976



Mr. E. H. Feierabend
Vice President
PPG - Winchester

Subject: Notes on Environmental Asbestos Meeting with New York Transit Authority, New York Air Resources, and Representatives from Environmental Sciences Laboratory at Mt. Sinai Hospital

On Thursday, 2/26/76, I had occasion to attend a meeting with representatives of the above organizations to review plans for subway air sampling for asbestos. Although a portion of the meeting was devoted to comments and questions related to air sampling procedures and the need for actual physical testing of the RPG brake shoe, there were some formal and informal comments made which are of direct interest to the Friction Products Group.

The Environmental Sciences Laboratory at Mt. Sinai Hospital headed by Dr. Selikoff has for a number of years been accumulating data on asbestos levels in the environment, first as related to occupational exposures and more recently as they relate to total environmental exposure. Their most well known recent study was the determination of exposures during brake shoe relining activities in repair shops. However, the occupational limit of 5 fibers per cubic centimeter greater than 5 microns in size was used as the index of exposure. Submicron asbestos concentrations were not publicized. This is now being followed by an urban street level study containing submicron fiber data which will be published in Environmental Technology next month.

In a side conversation with Mt. Sinai representatives, the reason for their strong interest in submicron brake shoe emissions became apparent. With the integration of some final data into their research, they feel that they will be able to demonstrate conclusively the carcinogenic response of the body to asbestos fibers, particularly those in the submicron and Angstrom (10^{-7} millimeters) ranges. The research developed because of the fact that asbestos fibers, being relatively indestructible, will fracture and separate into uncountable numbers of minute fibrils in the environment, continuously multiplying due to the increasing contribution from man-made sources. The fibers have minimal terminal velocity because

