



HAFNER INDUSTRIES, INC.

P.O. BOX 3923 AMITY STA. • NEW HAVEN, CONN. 06525

February 2, 1979

Mr. Leonard W. Weaver
Technical Center Manager
Bird & Son
East Walpole, Mass. 02032

Dear Mr. Weaver:

A copy of your letter dealing with the asbestos controversy to Plastics Design Forum which appeared in the January/February 1979 issue is attached.

Let me quickly say that I subscribe completely to its contents for it represents the clear reflection of an informed writer.

If only the media who actually form the vast majority of public opinion would develop the whole story - and not treat an appropriate newsworthy subject so superficially - we would all be better served.

We have a proprietary and commercial interest in the asbestos story which may be of interest to you. It involves the chemical recovery of a variety of PVC-containing wastes for the purpose of reusing them as materials. One of the materials reclaimed is asbestos fiber.

We are entering the market development phase and believe you will be interested in both the quality of the product(s) and its forecasted selling price which will be quite competitive with your raw material sources.

A recent SRI study predicts a 10% shortfall in world asbestos supply by 1980. Additionally, the reclaimed PVC resins and additives have been evaluated as at least equal to their virgin counterparts. The PVC market development effort is also moving forward now. Your vinyl siding operation may also have interest in its price and quality advantages thereby avoiding some of the price escalations.

My contact(s) with Bird & Son have involved our evaluation of its hardware. My long-standing contact has been Mr. Robert Groh.

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Mr. Leonard W. Weaver
Bird & Son

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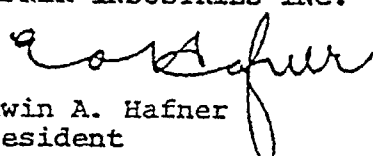
This letter therefore contains buy-and-sell opportunities for writer and addressee. I would like to hear from Bird & Son for I believe a dialogue established now could have economic benefits, as well as a contribution to materials and energy conservation with environmental improvement.

Hopefully, Bird & Son share our national conservation and environmental goals which we are dedicated to see realized. It is too seldom that this type of effort offers an economic benefit that accompanies a useful social good.

We would like to discuss our venture more specifically with you and hope that you will favorably consider this business opportunity.

Very truly yours,

HAFNER INDUSTRIES INC.


Edwin A. Hafner
President

Enc.

EAH/plt

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READERS' FORUM/LETTERS

Asbestos controversy (cont.)

Your discussions of asbestos in the Reader's Forum/Opinion section of your November/December issue seem to place the emphasis in the wrong place. First, the recognition of the hazardous nature of asbestos is belated, to say the least. It was back in the 1930s that public health officials identified most of the problems related to asbestos fiber and the more enlightened firms took steps to protect the health of the workers.

Second, there seems to be a disproportionate amount of pride being expressed by companies who succeed in eliminating the use of asbestos fiber. Granted that there are many instances where it should be eliminated for public health reasons, and that where substitute materials cannot be used without impairing the properties of the finished product, this is not always possible.

As recognized in your article, asbestos has many unique properties that have no counterpart in anything else. It seems that the first responsibility of industry is to recognize when there are no adequate substitutes and then design the manufacturing operation in such a way that the fibers are properly confined both during and after the processing step. An accomplishment of this sort would be more worthy of pride than the simple blind elimination of the use of asbestos fiber.

Leonard W. Weaver
Technical Center Manager
Bird & Son
East Walpole, Mass.

'Must' reading

The article "Design options for business-machine housings" (September/October 1978) is just great! This is the type of material so greatly needed in the design business. I have made it "must" reading for all of our designers.

Earlier this year, we were involved in a business-machine housing that required an extensive review of the various options noted in your article. Also, the stability properties were reviewed for

each material. As designers, we are not only concerned with the aesthetic appearance but also the long-term use requirements.

I find your magazine to be an excellent source of plastics technology that every industrial designer should read.

Harold N. Minick, IDSA
President
KMH Inc.
Ceresco, Mich.

Plastics container 'Goof'

I really enjoy your Gallery of Goofs. Here's one you may have covered, or maybe nobody considers it a goof: the "Real lemon" lemon-sized and shaped plastic container. The manufacturer put such a small base on it that the thing always falls over. The company, pretty much ignored me when I wrote them.

Another "goof" is the difficulty (often impossibility) of repairing plastic items. If only "schlock" manufacturers built plastic items a little more ruggedly instead of cutting costs to the 0.0000(?) of a cent, materials can be repaired. Keep on exposing "goofs." They're what make the term "plastic" an obscenity to many people.

Ed Huser
Cavaller, N.D.

Metrics now... or later?

I enjoyed your editorial and the fine article on metrics in the November/December 1978 issue of PDF. At present I would prefer encircling 291 (have PDF use U.S. measurements with metric equivalents in parentheses).

However, the subject of metrics is confusing enough to me without being told that "a radian is equivalent to 57 degrees 18 inches" on p. 54, and to convert from psi to MPa by multiplying by 0.0689 on p. 52.

Obviously the m in min was dropped; but 0.0689 is approximately 10 times too large, 0.00689476 being more precise.

Rounding off 5/9 to 0.555555... is

quite acceptable, but 0.566 on p. 54 is not good enough in the formula for converting to deg C.

I like the five significant figures given to convert from kg to lb (2.2046), but why give us only two significant figures (0.0011) to convert from kg to short ton and (0.00045) to convert from lb to metric ton? I would have preferred to see 0.0011023 and 0.00045359 used, respectively.

Several other examples limit the conversion accuracy to only two significant places, while an exact figure like 0.3048 is rounded off to 0.305.

Possibly you may consider the above "nit-picking." With the more accurate information being available, it is where to use as one sees fit. For example, the conversion of \$1.15/lb to \$2.55/kg is actually \$2.54/kg to the nearest penny but can be rounded off to the nearest nickel, as was obviously done in the last line of the article. Small change!

Edward J. Sampson
Brockton, Mass.

Most people think that when we go "metrics" we will be in step with the "rest of the world." We, if it even comes to pass, are going to the weird French Systems Internationale. It is only partially metric, as there are grains, liters and meters. However, there will be a multitude of meaningless terms used for "force," "power," and so on that will confuse generations to come and the rest of the world.

Phil Pincha
Engineering Manager
Lortone Div., Carborundum Co.
Seattle, Wash.

I believe we should convert to metric right now, but obviously you need to show the old units for a while.

Some additional thoughts from a former European, who is making the changes back to what I used to do (and it's tough!):

The magic is not metrics, it's decimal.

001055 (continued)



REPLY TO: EAST WALPOLE, MA 02032

TEL: 617-668-2500

November 16, 1978

To the Editor
Plastics Design Forum
1120 E. 17th Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80218

Gentlemen:

Your discussions of asbestos in the Readers' Forum/Opinion section of your November/December issue seem to place the emphasis in the wrong place. In the first place, the recognition of the hazardous nature of asbestos is belated. To say the least, it was back in the 1930's that public health officials identified most of the problems related to asbestos fiber, and the more enlightened industrial firms took steps to protect the health of the workers.

Secondly, there seems to be a disproportionate amount of pride being expressed by companies who succeed in eliminating the use of asbestos fiber. Granted that there are many instances where it should be eliminated for public health reasons, and where substitute materials can be used without impairing the properties of the finished product, this is not always possible.

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Very truly yours,

Leonard W. Weaver
Technical Center Manager

LWW/rp

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