Gen. F6-1(4) Letters

B.F.Goodrich

B. F. Goodrich Chemical Company

A DIVISION OF THE B. F. GOODRICH COMPANY

6100 OAK TREE BOULEVARD • CLEVELAND, OHIO 44131 • PHONE 216-524-0200

INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT

LSV. Situation

March 6, 1974

VIA AIR MAIL

Mr. Dean R. Webb
Manager, Corporate Accounts
Dow Chemical U.S.A.
1804 Illuminating Bldg.
55 Public Square
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

Dear Dean:

Relative to the discussion with you and Marv Larson yesterday, I obtained from Al Hatfield a copy of the letter which was forwarded to our customers. Al indicated a willingness to share this information with you on the basis that we also be given the same type of information that Dow has been supplying its customers. Please forward this information to my attention.

I hope that the sharing of this information might be helpful to both companies in attempting to solve this most difficult problem.

Best regards,

C.R. Flynn
CRF:jmo
cc: A.L. Hatfield
M.W. Larson

Enclosure

2473000

Dear Sir:

On January 23, 1974, a public statement was released by The B.F.Goodrich Company concerning our investigation of the deaths of three employees at our Louisville, Ky. plant from a rare form of liver cancer, and the possible connections between these deaths and their work over a number of years in our PVC polymerization operations.

Later search of available medical records revealed that a fourth employee had died from the same cause, angiosarcoma of the liver, in 1968.

At the time of issuing our first statement on January 23, B.F.Goodrich provided all data we had at that time to the Kentucky Department of Labor, representative of the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). These agencies are currently investigating these cases, are carrying out industry-wide epidemiological studies, and are in contact with European governments with major PVC industries. We are continuing to cooperate fully with these agencies.

Also cooperating with the government are 19 producers of vinyl chloride monomer and PVC under sponsorship of the Manufacturing Chemists Association, 1825 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. This group is sponsoring lengthy and in-depth toxicological and epidemiological studies on vinyl chloride and workers.

As yet no definite connection has been established between these four angiosarcoma cases and any of the some 50 chemicals which may have been used in polymerization of PVC or its compounds at our Louisville plant. Vinyl chloride monomer, a chlorinated hydrocarbon, is a primary suspect due to the fact it is a major raw material of high volatility to which our employees have probably had the greatest exposure. It should be pointed out that study of medical records at our other five plants have revealed no similar cases, and no others in the United States have been reported.

As you may know, some residual unpolymerized vinyl chloride monomer remains in commercial polyvinyl chloride polymers and compounds. The levels in Geon resins, plastics and latexes range from virtually undectable levels to those high enough to suggest the possibility of detectable vapor concentrations in closed storage or in some processing steps, such as heated mixing equipment.

2473000I

We are in no position to determine if the manner in which our vinyl products are used and stored in your plant constitute a potential problem since these operations are not under our control. We do, however, suggest that you review your own operational procedures and take appropriate action.

We would like to point out that the present investigations are confined to polymerization operations where the amount of vinyl chloride, the starting monomer, is much higher than it would be in any process we know involving finished polymer or compounds. In our plants we have reduced exposure to levels below 50ppm of vinyl chloride.

It is not the intent of this memorandum to state that the cause of angiosarcoma of the liver is exposure to vinyl chloride monomer but to point out to our customers that small, variable amounts of this raw material remain in the polymer in unchanged form and that it is one of the suspected chemicals.

We will do our best to keep you informed on this subject as investigations proceed.

Sincerely,

R. P. Kenney
Vice President - International

2478002