

TOXIC SUBSTANCES TASK FORCE

RESULTS OF CONTACTS AT TEXAS CITY

As requested in the first task force meeting, I contacted Herb Nelson in Licensing Department at the Texas City plant. I also talked with John Fox of the Safety Department and O. W. Cooper in Research at Texas City. This is a summary of those conversations.

1. Herb Nelson (861-2433) is involved with licensing of vinyl chloride technology. His clients are all in foreign countries.

Herb has been dealing with licensing in Mexico, Spain, Israel and Japan, where exposure regulations are much less harsh, so they do not need to use any unusual methods for exposure prevention. They are using single non-flushed mechanical seals, without any type of hood or fume collection. The vents on storage tanks and other vessels are condensed and recycled, if possible, or burned. They do not do any exposure monitoring or air sampling. For incineration equipment, Herb recommended the Scientific Design Co.

2. John Fox (861-2325) was in the Safety Department when the vinyl chloride plant was in operation at Texas City.

The plant processed vinyl chlorides for two years before the government passed the current strict regulations. It tried to meet these regulations for nine months, after which it shut down because of the expense involved. The plant tried to achieve 1 ppm levels, and could sometimes reach this, but most often were between 1 and 5 ppm. Blood tests were done on the personnel, but none of the other medical surveillance measures spelled out in the regulations. They used both personnel carried adsorbers with the Sipeen pumps, and also had a portable leak detecting device which could measure total hydrocarbon levels.

The equipment in the plant was designed for operation at 2000 psig, but there were no special equipment modifications made for exposure prevention. John said that they had some problems with the pumps leaking. He was not sure whether single or double seals were used, but said they were not flushed. There were leak problems in the unloading area, at the fittings on the tanks for unloading and for sampling. They used a vacuum box for sampling.

3. O. W. Cooper (861-2181) did the lab analysis of the samples taken in the Texas City vinyl chloride plant.

Results of Cont. At Texas City Continued

Mr. Cooper said the gas chromatograph used was originally obtained from Dow, but that many modifications were made. They were able to do analyses in the parts per trillion range. He suggested equipment made by Ethyl Corp. as being more operable, with similar accuracy, and possibly adaptable to the toxic substance dealt with by this task force.

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