From L.L. RIPPEY

PITTSBURGH OFFICE - 6

L. RIPPEY
PITTSBURGH OFFICE
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1987-06-26

RE: ASBESTOS DEMOLITION/RENOVATION PROJECTS

It is critically important to take whatever steps are necessary to insure that people involved in jobs where there is a potential for exposure to asbestos are aware of the hazards. These people whether they are Alcoa employees or contractors must be informed of the presence of asbestos. Because asbestos containing materials were used so widely at one time, their presence should be investigated prior to all demolition and renovation projects.

One Alcoa location is considering the establishment of an Environmental Permit for demolition/renovation projects similar to Welding Permits or Confined Space Entry Permits to make sure that the asbestos question is raised in the job planning stage. The Environmental Permit idea being considered is a pre-job safety and health review procedure to cover asbestos and possibly other hazardous materials such as PCBs and silica.

Most Alcoa plants have a policy which calls for treating all unknown insulation types as if they were asbestos until a reliable analysis is done. The new OSHA Asbestos Standards for Construction requires labeling of installed asbestos insulation either by direct labeling or by the same types of alternatives that are allowed under the Hazard Communication Standard. These alternatives may include placards, job procedures, diagrams, or color coding of asbestos containing materials. Whatever method is used to make the presence of asbestos known must be communicated to employees in order to be effective. Even with a good asbestos identification program, there is still a possibility of finding asbestos concealed within process equipment or building structures, so a contingency plan for this eventuality needs to be formulated and communicated.

The risks of accidental and unnecessary exposure to asbestos are too great to leave the detection of asbestos and the communication of the hazards to chance.

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT
AL-1647

ALCOA

Also on the subject of asbestos, a recently published correction to the OSHA Asbestos Standard includes more explicit language barring the use of disposable respirators for the protection of asbestos exposed workers. This point was covered in last fall's Industrial Hygiene Technical Bulletin but because of OSHA's recent correction it is felt that this ban should be reiterated.

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