

Firestone
INTEROFFICE

DATE August 11, 1975

10 THOSE LISTED BELOW

FROM SAFETY & TRAINING - PLASTICS CO

REFERENCE

SUBJECT NIOSH - UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA HEALTH STUDIES - POTTSTOWN

On August 5, 1975, a meeting was held in Pottstown to discuss the above study. Attending were:

Dr. A. J. McMichael - Univ. of N.C.
Mr. R. J. Waxweiler - NIOSH
Dr. H. Falk - CDC
Dr. C. Heath - CDC
Mr. J. Miller - Int'l. URW
Mr. L. S. Beliczky - Int'l. URW
Ms. C. Bell - Int'l. URW
Mr. M. Higgins - Local URW
Mr. B. E. Jones - Local URW
Mr. C. F. Spadaro - Local URW
Mr. R. Reigel - Local URW
Mr. R. E. Zeiber - Local UEW
Mr. T. C. Walker - Firestone
Dr. L. H. Ballou - Firestone
Mr. R. V. Hassmiller - Firestone
Dr. R. S. Brockman - Firestone
Mr. H. N. West - Firestone
Mr. G. D. Lloyd - Firestone

I am attaching a copy of all NIOSH/CDC and Univ. of N.C. handout materials to the copies of this memo to those Firestone personnel who did not attend this meeting.

Three presentations were made; one, by Mr. R. Waxweiler on the subject of NIOSH/CDC Medical Studies, two, by Dr. C. Heath on the subject of Chromosome Studies and three, by Dr. A. McMichael on the subject of Pulmonary Function Studies. These presentations are briefly summarized as follows:

I. MEDICAL STUDIES - Mr. R. Waxweiler:

1. Objectives of study:
 - A. To detect liver abnormalities in VCM and non-VCM areas.
 - B. To identify the best medical testing procedure that might be a precursor to AGS.
 - C. To identify other medical problems.

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2. Twenty four tables of comparative medical studies were provided and explained with a verbal narrative. The final report from NIOSH/CDC and the Univ. of N.C. will be published as one paper. This final report should be available in about one month.
3. Their appeared to be more hepatomegaly (enlarged livers) among the VC workers than among the other test groups as measured by palpation and percussion. Measurement by liver scan was not successful. It was felt that Univ. of N.C. should continue this study among the various groups.
4. There was a noted increase in systolic blood pressure with the most significant difference between the chemical and rubber workers. This study should continue.
5. There was evidence of Raynaud's phenomenon (AOL) in a few workers. In comparison to earlier studies there was no evidence of increased symptoms.
6. They were unable to detect any differences of other diseases among the groups studied.
7. With regard to health problems not related to VC, hearing loss and rashes seem to be prevalent. Both of these problems should be followed even though their screening tests were crude.
8. The results of the liver function tests indicate there is no significant difference between the groups studied. No cases of AGS are suspected, however, the available screening tests are not yet specific for AGS. Those employees with abnormal liver function tests should continue to be followed. The data results indicate a need for the development of more specific screening methods.
9. Dr. Falk, CDC, stated that data collected on stillbirths, defects and miscarriages indicated no difference between the chemical and rubber workers and the general population. This comparison was made from both a before and after VCM exposure standpoint.

II. CHROMOSOME STUDY - Dr. C. Heath:

1. Brief data were presented in the form of a chart, shown below, and verbal comments regarding the presence of abnormal (broken) chromosomes.
2. There was little difference noted among the chemical, plastics and rubber workers. However, these groups were statistically higher in abnormal chromosomes than the non-industrial study group (CDC employees).

	<u># People</u> <u>Tested</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u># Cells Analyzed</u> <u>Abnormal</u>	<u>% Abnormal</u>
Chemical	15	755	48	6.4
Plastics	4	180	14	7.8
Rubber	18	856	45	5.3
Control (CDC)	4	686	21	3.1

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3. It was apparent that further studies were needed and would be forthcoming to show, for example, if the rubber workers were at risk. Additional basic research is needed to determine the cause of chromosome breakage.

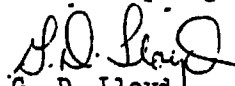
III. PULMONARY FUNCTION - Dr. A. McMichael:

1. In this study the objective was to attempt to identify both chronic and acute pulmonary function (PF) problems within the various work groups. Three tables were presented along with explanatory comments.
2. Of the 489 employees tested, 53 had P.F. tests before and after their work (17 chemical, 12 plastics, 27 rubber) to determine acute P.F. problems.
3. The overall results, taking into account the noted smoking and drinking habits, indicated no statistically significant difference within the groups which might indicate the presence of any VC or PVC problems.
4. There are some small indications of expiratory flow rate differences from the 25 to 75% empty lung conditions among the various groups. The largest differences occur in the 75% empty category among the plastics and former chemical workers in comparison to the other groups. However, the former chemical group may consist of medical transfer employees with former respiratory problems.
5. At this time no P.F. problems are attributed to VC exposure--those seen are mainly due to smoking.
6. It is anticipated that further studies should show that smokers in the Chemical Plant are vastly increased risks for P.F. problems. In addition the smokers loose more P.F. volume over the shift than those who don't smoke.

OVERALL SUMMARY AND COMMENTS:

Nothing very compelling with respect to VC or PVC workers was discovered. Some comments were made that this may be due to the entire industry test groups here (and in all industries) being at some type of risk when compared to non-industrial groups.

Numerous comments were made regarding the need to continue these types of studies with the Univ. of N.C. and the presence of and continued need for cooperation and information sharing between Firestone, the URW and University of N.C. All pledged their support.


G. D. Lloyd

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DISTRIBUTION:

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With Attachments:

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Mr. J. M. Haskell
Mr. R. W. Arnold
Mr. R. A. Park
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