FILE NAME: Drywall Spackling Compounds (DWSC)

DATE: 1977 Aug 17

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NORTON & SON

INCORPORATED

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August 17, 1977

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CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

Mr. S. John Byington
U.S. CONSUMER
PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20207

Dear Mr. Byington:

Your letter of August 12th stating that the Consumer Product Safety Commission voted to propose a ban on the manufacture and sale of consumer patching compounds, I assume meant patching compounds containing asbestos, and on that basis I am happy to comment on the proposal.

I also assume that by this time the Consumer Product Safety Commission knows that Spackling Compounds and patching materials in general have never contained asbestos, and that asbestos was generally contained only in the generic group known as Joint Compounds and Joint Cements.

It is most unfortunate that this industry was not consulted before erroneous reports were given wide publicity which caused entirely unnecessary effort and expense to counter the mis-information. See our attached ads. We, as the owners of the registered trade mark Spackle - a product that has never contained asbestos - were particularly burdened by this quixotic ignorance of even the terminology. Many of us in this industry have devoted our working days to the pursuit of better consumer products and better consumer service. We are not consumer adversaries; we are consumer servants, and are the experts, not the instant seers like Dr. Selikoff.

Having spoken my piece, let me sum up the comment you requested: I know of no spackling compound or patcher that ever contained asbestos. Banning asbestos would be a little like banning asbestos in butter; banning asbestos in joint cements and joint compounds is not necessary today since I'm sure all producers have removed it, but it would be a worthwhile safeguard against its reintroduction in the future.

Very truly yours,

NORTON & SON, I NC.

Edward F. Norton, Jr.
Vice President

/rm

29