



ASBESTOS INFORMATION ASSOCIATION

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NEWS & NOTES

31 July 1979

AIA/NA To Hold Industry-Government Conference In September

← Jim, you should attend
CPJ

In conjunction with its Ninth Annual Meeting, AIA/NA will hold an Industry-Government Conference on Sept. 19-20. The Conference will be held at Stouffer's National Center Hotel, Arlington, VA (five minutes from Washington National Airport on Jefferson Davis Highway).

Principal Conference sessions include: an industry panel presentation on recommended work practices for asbestos-containing products used in construction industry; review of current and prospective regulations affecting the industry by a regulatory agency panel (CPSC, DOT, EPA, FDA, MSHA and OSHA); and an update of current information on the asbestos-health relationship by a medical-scientific panel. Included among invited principal speakers are: Dr. Eula Bingham, Assistant Secretary of Labor (OSHA); Etienne van der Rest, Chairman of the Governing Council, Asbestos International Association; Dr. Marvin A. Schneiderman, Associate Director for Science Policy, National Cancer Institute; Dr. John Froines, Deputy Director, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health; and Lionel Puize, representing the Quebec Asbestos Mining Association. In addition, a member of Congress is being invited as the closing speaker following lunch on Sept. 20.

Guy G. Gabrielson, Jr., Chairman of the Board, Nicolet, Inc., and member of AIA/NA Executive Committee, will serve as chairman of the Conference. AIA/NA memo. of July 31 forwarded details to members. Individual notifications are being made to non-AIA/NA members. Attendance is expected to approximate 150. Inquires to the Association's Executive Director are invited.

CONGRESSMAN CALLS FOR CRIMINAL PENALTY FOR CONCEALING INDUSTRIAL HAZARDS

In press release of July 26, Rep. George Miller (D-CA) announced he had, along with 41 co-sponsors, introduced

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a bill to establish "tough criminal penalties for corporate officials who knowingly conceal information about health and safety hazards from their employees and the public." A copy of proposed legislation, reportedly H.R. 4973, was not available at N&N press time.

Upon introducing H.R. 4973, Miller said, "When someone makes a decision to conceal such information, knowing full well that peoples' lives are going to be jeopardized, I believe a criminal act has been committed."

The bill mandates corporate officers to report to their employees and to federal agencies any information concerning health or safety hazards stemming from exposure to, or use of, a product or a manufacturing process. Failure to warn the appropriate people would subject a convicted offender to a fine of at least \$50,000 or a jail term of at least two years, or both.

According to Miller, this legislation does not require any additional testing of products, and it does not expand governmental regulatory activity or paperwork requirements. He cited recent examples of alleged cover-ups he is seeking to eliminate, with special emphasis on the asbestos industry (N&N May). However, Miller said, "Asbestos is not the only example of this kind of corporate indifference to human health and safety." He also cited the pesticides DBCP and kepone, and the chemical benzidine. In addition, Firestone 500 tires and Ford Pinto automobiles were mentioned.

Miller said he is hopeful that "the large number of co-sponsors and the growing public concern over the issue will move Congress to take swift action on the legislation." Hearings by House Judiciary Committee under chairmanship of Rep. Peter W. Rodino (D-NJ) may be expected later this year, according to Miller.

Copies of this proposed bill will be provided to members when available from House Docket Office.

OSHA AND NCI TO SPONSOR AN EXTENSIVE ASBESTOS ALERT CAMPAIGN

Details of a prospective Asbestos Alert Campaign, Phase II, jointly sponsored by OSHA and National Cancer Institute (NCI) is described in a Request for Proposal (RFP) issued on July 26 by Department of Labor, Office of Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management. Initial information concerning this effort first became available at a Nov. 15, 1978, meeting of Asbestos Education Task Force conducted by National Cancer Institute (N&N Nov).

This informational and educational Asbestos Alert Campaign is a follow-on to a similar one by NCI which was conducted in '78 to inform doctors, workers, former workers, and the public regarding risks of asbestos exposure. While the proposed campaign is a joint OSHA/NCI undertaking, it will be under primary direction of OSHA. In Dec. '78, OSHA requested about \$700,000 from NCI to support the campaign.

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The RFP states that purpose of campaign is "to provide an integrated program for informing and educating current, former, and future workers, their families and the public about the health hazards of working in asbestos related industries. Primary audience will be currently employed workers; secondary audiences will be former workers, health professionals, labor and management, state and local government agencies, vocational and technical students, and public.

Total work outlined in RFP is defined in specific tasks as listed below:

- Task #1 - Designing an overall media and education campaign
- Task #2 - Staging a national conference
- Task #3 - Conducting a media campaign
- Task #4 - Developing a vocational/technical school module
- Task #5 - Producing a slide/tape training presentation
- Task #6 - Producing a 16mm training film
- Task #7 - Developing a curriculum for and staging regional training conferences for worker representatives
- Task #8 - Conducting a post-campaign analysis

Prospective contractors must submit proposals by Aug. 28. Time frame for implementation of above tasks varies from four to 18 months following award of contract. AIA/NA, earlier this year, forwarded a letter to OSHA requesting that an industry representative serve on an advisory group for materials that will be developed. OSHA responded that the Association would be notified "when AIA/NA involvement is appropriate." Copy of RFP available to members on request.

TWO OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES ISSUE RFP'S OF INTEREST

The Bureau of Mines has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to determine the feasibility of producing a synthetic fiber from "abundant low cost U.S. domestic raw materials and wastes into lengths suitable for cement reinforcement, and comparing properties such as tensile strength and chemical durability on the synthetic fibers with those of natural asbestos." Work on this project must be completed within 14 months after effective date of contract.

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RFP states quantity of asbestos being imported in U.S. is increasing, and coupled with increasing world consumption, may lead to a critical shortage of asbestos. Interest in research to produce a substitute fiber from abundant low-cost raw materials is consistent with the Bureau's program to minimize mineral and metal needs, according to RFP.

EPA's recent RFP proposes to investigate association between ambient exposure to asbestos and mortality from respiratory cancer, mesothelioma, and cardiovascular diseases. Site of intended study is Calaveras, Fresno and San Benito counties, California. Contract will require completion of work within six months of award date.

OSHA HEAD SPEAKS TO RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK BENEFIT

In a July 24 speech to an American Association for the Advancement of Science forum on risk assessment in Washington, D.C., Dr. Eula Bingham, Assistant Secretary of Labor (OSHA), said personal risk assessment has been "sometimes promoted" as an alternative to social regulation, but social regulation is needed in the area of worker safety and health. She stated OSHA does use risk assessment techniques in developing and enforcing standards, but that "the agency maintains that the use of risk benefit analysis requires considerable caution."

Dr. Bingham asserted that decisionmakers want their actions based on as much information and analysis as possible, but she added "there are a number of obvious difficulties with attempts to rely uncritically on any form of risk benefit analysis." Such difficulties include the fact that often different groups, sometimes later generations, are at risk from not regulating than those benefiting temporarily from non-regulation, she explained.

Another problem, Bingham said, is placing a value on risk. "What does worth mean in terms of pain, suffering and family dislocation?", she asked. Dr. Bingham listed four ways by which OSHA considers the financial and health impact of a regulation:

- . Carefully assesses the health and safety risks of the workplace
- . Evaluates the costs of alternative strategies
- . Endeavors to select the most cost effective method of complying with its standards
- . Considers timing of implementation of standards.

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IRLG PUBLISHES CARCINOGEN IDENTIFICATION REPORT

By notice in the Federal Register of July 6, the Interagency Regulatory Liaison Group (IRLG) published its report, "Scientific Bases for Identification of Potential Carcinogens and Estimation of Risks," and requested comments by Sept 30. IRLG is comprised of the following member agencies: CPSC, EPA, FDA, OSHA and Food Safety and Quality Service, Department of Agriculture.

The report describes basis for making qualitative evaluation of whether a particular substance presents a carcinogenic hazard and how the results of epidemiological studies and animal bioassays, along with other types of information, are used in making that evaluation. Report also describes methods that are used in making quantitative estimates of the carcinogenic risk posed by a substance if such risk estimates are appropriate.

Since OSHA has already received comment on its proposed generic cancer policy, this agency will not participate in the review process for this report. At conclusion of comment period, OSHA will determine whether revisions to its final cancer policy are warranted prior to its publication.

Designed to ensure that IRLG members agencies evaluate and classify carcinogenic risks consistently, the report, however, will be a guideline and will have no regulatory status. AIA/NA has report under review for possible comment.

OSHA AND NIOSH WILL EXCHANGE DATA WITH EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Information on toxic substances, health hazard sampling techniques, proposed regulations, and testing methodologies will be exchanged by OSHA and NIOSH with the nine-nation Commission of European Communities, according to a July 18 OSHA news release. Agreement covers exchanges on education, training and research programs affecting job safety and health, and calls for possible high-level meetings to plan and review cooperation. Also under consideration is an international workshop on occupational safety and health. Agreement stems from a Dec. meeting of OSHA and NIOSH officials with representatives of the Commission which administers joint economic and social policies of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and United Kingdom.

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METHODS OF DETERMINING CANCER RISK ARE SUBJECT OF OTA REPORT TO CONGRESS

The Office of Technology Assessment, the scientific support office for Congress, is reportedly reviewing technologies for determining cancer risks from the environment to present to Congress a "review of what has gone on and what will be" forthcoming in cancer risk assessment.

The 18-month study, begun in April, will review major areas of carcinogen study, including testing, extrapolation technologies, estimates of risk from environmental and occupational factors, and social, political and economic considerations of carcinogen regulation.

OTA's work will be reviewed by an 13-member advisory panel including representatives from several universities and hospitals, the industry-sponsored American Industrial Health Council, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the AFL-CIO and United Steelworkers of America. An introductory meeting of the panel was held in June, another meeting will be held in Nov.

MEETINGS OF INTEREST

. . . NTP Annual Plan - Aug. 10, HEW North Bldg., 330 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, D.C. Annual Plan consists of description of HEW's National Toxicology Program (NTP) current year efforts and review of current HEW research related to toxicology. Dr. David P. Rall, NIEHS, is director of NTP. Dr. Eula Bingham, OSHA, will participate. (Leslie Gardner, NTP, Research Triangle Park, N.C. 27709; (919) 541-3267).

. . . Recognition, Evaluation and Control of Occupational Health Hazards - Aug. 13-15, Marriott Inn, 101 Marriott Dr., Pittsburgh, PA, sponsored by Industrial Health Foundation. Course will provide intermediate level industrial hygiene training with workshops. Fee: \$275. (IHF, 5231 Centre Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232; (412) 687-2100).

. . . Informing Employees Symposium - Sept. 14, Hyatt Hotel, Union Square, San Francisco, sponsored by Chemical Manufacturers Association. Focus will be on how to inform employees about hazards in workplace. Speakers include Rep. Edward P. Beard (D-RI) and Donald Vial, Dir. of Calif. Dept. of Industrial Relations. (Milton Freifeld, CMA, 1825 Conn. Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009; (202) 328-4264).

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