

# Department of Health

File No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date April 19, 1955

MEMORANDUM TO

Mr. E. H. Gilbert,

Chief Inspector,  
Factory Inspection Branch,  
Department of Labour.

FROM

E. Mastromatteo, M. D.,

Division of Industrial Hygiene.

RE Garlock Packing Company of Canada  
200 Queen St. W., Hamilton, Ontario

Because of an inquiry from the firm a visit was recently made to this plant. There are about 20 employees who are engaged in the manufacture of a gasketing material compounded of asbestos and synthetic rubber and in the manufacture of jute, flax and asbestos packing.

The gasket material is processed in a special room with ventilation and fire and explosion precautions. Here asbestos and a solvent mixture of heptane-hexane is charged to mixing drum. After mixing the material is milled, pressed into sheets and dusted with soapstone.

In a room adjoining this room trimmings, remnants and rejected batches of cured gasketing material are shredded in a special machine. Asbestos dust is produced in this operation.

The packing material is made elsewhere. Here the asbestos is handled in wet state and so the dust is minimized. Jute and flax are also spun and braded. After brading the materials are dipped into heated vessels of melted mutton tallow, glycerin and glucose mixture, or petroleum wax. The mutton tallow at times produces an offensive odour when rancid. The petroleum has caused some irritating fumes when heated. Following dipping graphite may be sprinkled over the packing. Graphite is spilled on the floor and mixes with spilled oils or waxes causing the floor to become very slippery. Safety treads have been installed on the stairway to this area but not in the working area around machinery and heated vessels.

## Suggestions.

1. The asbestos shredding operation should be enclosed and ventilated to the outside. It will be necessary to provide a collector so that asbestos fibres will not be emitted to the neighbourhood.

2. Appropriate type respiratory protection should be provided to individual operators exposed to asbestos dust, jute dust and flax dust.

3. Non slip flooring should be provided and maintained in area about machinery, heated vessels and stairways.

4. The process employing petroleum wax would preferably be



2.

ventilated to the outside.

It is suggested that the ventilation for the asbestos shredding be provided as soon as possible and perhaps duplicate plans might be submitted to the Examiner of Plans.

*E*

E. Mastromatteo, M. D.

E.M./r.w.