FILE NAME: Kaiser Gypsum (KG)

DATE: 0000

DOC#: KG059

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Barry Castleman Notes on Kaiser Gypsum

Kaiser Gypsum

JE Crum depo 11/6/98 -- KG salesman 1964-88, never saw warning label as KG claimed was used 1972-

LR Flicker 3/1/65 memo passes on AP release on Asb/Meso received from the Gypsum Association.

LR Flicker 3/29/66 memo to safety supervisors advises resp. prot. for workers handling asbestos.

AF Raffaelli 11-5-71 memo says all Accessory products have 1-10% asbestos in them.

JE Toomey 9/28/72 (?) "Asbestos – Labeling Kaiser Cement Products" memo recommends OSHA warning labels for Asb. products but no warning language specific to mixing and sanding "because there are no ... laws of regulations which require them."

JS Sheahan 3/1/74 memo "Dust from Joint Compound Job Operations" attaches testing reports on similar products from Gypsum Association and Union Carbide tests of KG drywall patching compounds.

- Recommends review of "whether asbestos warning labels may legitimately be removed from our premix products."
- Asserts that KG is only "major company carrying the asbestos warning on its premix and it is costing us business." Notes that Gypsum Assn. study committee favors asbestos warning on all pails of joint compound.
- "Third Report" Nov. 1973 test summary reports breathing zone exposures of 7.6 and 31.4 f/cc; (10-min. and) 30-min. samples given, highest for 1st dry compound 39.4 f/cc; 2d dry compound 14.8 f/cc; 1st premix 11.1 f/cc, 2d premix 9.7 f/cc. Data indicate that use of these products can be expected to exceed the 15-min. OSHA ceiling (also noted above) of 10 f/cc.
- Summary data: 6/13 (10-min.) sanding tests showed concentrations > 5 f/cc and 2/13 sanding tests showed exposures > 10 f/cc
- Tests of KGC compounds showed 54-66 f/cc for mixing and 1.1-4.3 for sanding (2-minute or less sampling times)

(Kaiser Gypsum)

1. Answers to Interrogatories on Product Histories (7/30/99) list 9 classes of products made between 1952-1978 using chrysotile asbestos in fractions as low as 0.9% and as high as 36.6%. KGC also made ceiling tiles with asbestos in its Oregon plant. There were at least 4 California plants (Antioch, Redwood City, Santa Ana, Long Beach).

2. Answers to Interrogatories (7/31/87) say KG replaced asbestos in K-Spray with ("specially processed") cellulose fiber; wood pulp was the replacement in ceiling textures; wollastenite in joint compounds. All Asb. replacements starting 1975. KGC does not recall when warnings appeared on sacks of asbestos from J-M (1969). Patent numbers and trademark names also enumerated.

IH surveys of plants Jan. 14-15, 1971 (Jacksonville), Apr. 12 and July 18, 1972 (Antioch), July 23, 1976 (Antioch). Time-weighted average limit (5 f/cc) set by OSHA not exceeded in these air samples, but apparently higher counts were recorded for dumping materials into hoppers. Not clear if 2 f/cc limit in effect as of July 1, 1976 was exceeded (p. 33).

Here it is also stated that KGC "became generally aware of the potential hazards of asbestos ... in the 1970s." And, KG "was unaware until approximately 1971 that there were any alleged potential health problems associated with exposure to asbestos..." (p. 27)