

Asbestos Exposure During Brake Lining Maintenance and Repair*

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Introduction

During the past decade, significant disease risk has been found associated with the inhalation of asbestos fibers in a number of occupational and environmental circumstances other than in asbestos mining, milling and manufacturing, where serious hazard was already known (Wagner et al., 1960; Newhouse and Thompson, 1965; Selikoff et al., 1964, 1965; Harries, 1968).

Such exposures were found in the construction industry and in shipbuilding, as well as in other industrial settings where asbestos products were used. More recently, asbestos exposure has been suggested to occur during automotive brake lining repair and installation work, and measurable concentrations of asbestos fiber were observed in the work environment of workmen involved in these operations (Hickish and Knight, 1970; Hatch, 1970; Boillat and Lob, 1973). With limited data available, however, uncertainty remained regarding the type and extent of asbestos exposure during this work. Some investigators have questioned whether free asbestos fibers survive the high temperatures produced during braking action (Lyach, 1968,

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