In general, the mortality rate of insulation workers reported by Selikoff is much higher than the rates found in studies of larger groups of people who work in factories producing asbestos-containing products, and in mines and mills processing asbestos. Why the incidence of certain diseases among insulation workers is so much higher than the other groups studied is a question as yet unanswered.

Unfortunately, as is so often the case with diseases that take from 10 to 40 years to develop, reliable data as to the past occupational exposure of these men to asbestos and other potentially hazardous dust and fumes in their work are not available.

As a result, at the present time we have little information as to what other factors may have influenced their high rate of disease except that those insulation workers who smoked cigarettes developed lung cancer at a rate far higher than the general population who smoked.

In 1970, with a grant from the National Air Pollution Control Administration, The National Academy of Sciences called together a blue-ribbon panel of asbestos-health experts to draft a document on the problem that would serve as the

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