



INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

Date: March 9, 1978

From: W. P. Lawrence

Location: 19 West - General Office

Subject: Employment of Women in VCM
and Organics Areas

To: F. C. Ludden

RECEIVED MAR 13 1978

Attached is a copy of Mr. R. E. Widing's memo of March 22, 1976, in which the Chemicals Group's policy was changed to permit women to work in the areas of the plant in which VCM is manufactured, handled and processed. This policy was established after a committee composed of line management, the Corporate Medical Director, Corporate and Division EEO representatives, Division Environmental Affairs, Division Safety, and the Law Department, reviewed the scientific data available at that time.

If Dr. Lovejoy has additional data or new scientific data that should be considered, would you please forward it to me and I will have a committee similar to the one above review the data. If there is substance to the data, the committee can recommend to our management that the policy be changed. However, until such time as this new evidence can be reviewed, I would not deviate from the policy as stated in the attached memo.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W. P. Lawrence".
W. P. Lawrence

WPL:eb

Attachment

cc: J. R. Farst
I. C. Klimas
F. C. Dehn
R. E. Sourwine

Revision in the VCM Medical Guidelines

Page 2

March 22, 1976

both male and female employees potentially exposed to VCM, information concerning the possible effects of VCM on the fetus either of the wife of a male employee, or a female employee who is pregnant. Attached is a suggested text for informing the employees of the possible genetic effects of VCM.

REW

R. E. Widing

/clg

Attachment

cc/wa: Messrs. L. B. Grant
W. B. Graybill/L. F. Sargent
W. R. Harris
J. F. Knott
H. C. Twiehaus/F. C. Dehn/Z. G. Bell
G. M. Zapp



PPG INDUSTRIES, INC./ONE GATEWAY CENTER/PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15222/AREA 412/434-2349

ROBERT E. WIDING, Vice President
Operations, Industrial Chemical Department

March 22, 1976

MESSRS. D. B. Dailey/A. C. Ellsworth
A. G. DeMarco/K. W. Richardson
G. J. Lambi/Lotte/J. W. Moore
A. T. Raetzsch/T. G. Taylor
G. C. Strickler/L. W. Piester

SUBJECT: Revision in the VCM Medical Guidelines

On October 16, 1974, a copy of the "Occupational Safety and Health Work Practices Guidelines for the Manufacture, Storage and Loading of Vinyl Chloride" was forwarded to you for your review and comment by Mr. John Clapperton.

There have been questions raised as to the validity of the data that prompted the position taken in the original guideline - Section V, Medical, paragraph (d) (7) which states:

"In view of preliminary results of animal toxicology studies, it is recommended that no woman who is pregnant or expects to become pregnant be employed directly in vinyl chloride monomer operations or in areas where vinyl chloride exposure may result."

After considering the scientific data now available, reconsidering the results of the animal studies and the results of our VCM Environmental Monitoring Program which has provided evidence of low worker exposure to VCM, it is the opinion of the Chemical Division that we should no longer prohibit female employees from working in areas where there is a potential VCM exposure. Accordingly, our Division policy is now to permit women to work in the areas of the plant in which VCM is manufactured, handled and processed. Each facility should modify the VCM Guidelines to concur with this position.

It is also recommended, that each employee who is assigned to the VCM area receive, at the time of his initial placement in the VCM area and annually thereafter, a training program that states the potential hazards of VCM of

MAR 22 1976

SL 072999

Recently, there have been several newspaper articles that suggests a relationship between vinyl chloride monomer with a higher incidence of miscarriages. This study was conducted by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the U.S. Center for Disease Control's Bureau of Epidemiology and the University of North Carolina's School of Public Health at a plant that has three separate operations - PVC Manufacturing, PVC Fabrication and the manufacturing of rubber tires.

Based upon available details of this study, there is mixed opinion within PPG concerning the quality of the data, the techniques employed in gathering the data and the interpretation of the data, however, we feel that it is in the best interest of our employees to alert them that this information has been published.

Miscarriages are common occurrences among women in the general population and can be caused by mental stress and physical exertion which are just two of the many factors that can result in this condition. There are women who also have quite a number of miscarriages and can never actually carry a fetus due to physical problems.

Our Medical and Environmental results continue to be encouraging and it is unlikely that such adverse health effects would occur due to the low levels that are encountered in day-to-day operations by our employees. If you or your spouse, however, are experiencing difficulties in this area, it is recommended that you arrange to discuss the subject with the plant physician.

We intend to gather more details and as this data becomes available, you will be so informed.