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October 19, 1950

Dr. W. G. Fredrick
Bureau of Industrial Hygiene
Detroit Department of Health
1151 Taylor Avenue
Detroit 2, Michigan

Dear Doctor Fredrick:

I have a question which I should like to have referred to the Committee on Threshold Limits.

Does the present MAC for asbestos, 5.0 million particles per cubic foot, refer only to the recognizable fibres, or to all dust present?

I believe that Gardner and others have shown fairly conclusively that asbestosis is produced only by the comparatively long fibres, so that the fibre count would seem to be a logical index. If it is used, however, it seems to me that 5 million may be too high. It has been my experience that even when only raw asbestos is being handled, the percentage of fibre in the air borne dust, recognizable using the light field counting technique, seldom exceeds 20 to 30 per cent. If a mixture, such as magnesia insulation or transit as being processed, the may be only 1 to 2 per cent fibre present. I am particularly interested in the proper evaluation of dust produced by such mixtures.

I should appreciate any consideration given to this question.

Yours very truly,

John J. Ferry
Industrial Hygienist
Works Hospital

JJF:VG

