FILE NAME: Hopeman Brothers (HB)

DATE: 1958

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Memos RE Marinite Label

CONFIDENTIAL

~~I. J. Pedly~~

Division Headquarters
June 18, 1958

Marinite Dust

Attached is a letter by V. B. Padham in which he is calling to our attention, a situation in which J-M may in the future have some responsibility.

I would appreciate your review of this letter and give me the benefit of your thinking in regard to the company liability.

It has been suggested by Mr. Flavin that possibly a statement could be made in our literature calling attention to the potential hazard in confined quarters.

T. H. Eaton

attach.

cc: E. D. Flavin
V. B. Padham - Nashua
file

CRMC-RUCK-016196

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July 1, 1958

T. H. Eaton

Marinite Dust

I have discussed your memorandum of June 18, 1958 with Hugh Jackson.

V. B. Padham is to be commended for his discovery of the situation existing at the Newport News Shipbuilding Yard. I think this is a matter that may result in extensive legal liability in the future unless it is properly handled.

The important feature is that the employee who is using a saw on Marinite should know what the precautions are that must be taken. Placing a statement in the literature does not carry to the employee the information he should have. It is suggested that a label be placed on the back of the sheets of Marinite. Hugh Jackson and I will be glad to give you the copy required for these labels. We have had the same experience in caution labeling on Celite products.

I am sending copies of this letter to Hugh Jackson and Al Schmidt of the Insurance Department since this is a matter which will increase our premiums on product liability insurance if any law suits are brought against us for failure to warn of the potential hazard.

Herbert Morton Ball

cc E. D. Flavin
V. B. Padham, Nashua
H. M. Jackson
A. M. Schmidt

CRMC-RUCK-016197

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Herbert Morton Ball

Division Headquarters
July 7, 1958

Marinite Dust

I appreciate your appraisal of the situation in connection with our Company's exposure when Marinite sheets are cut on the job, resulting in a considerable amount of dust.

In order that we may give further consideration to the proper labeling of all Marinite products, I would appreciate it if you would give me the copy required for these labels. Mr. Jackson is on vacation and I would like to get this under way before his return.

T. H. Eaton

cc: E. D. Flavin
J. B. Jobe
V. B. Padham - Nashua
H. M. Jackson
A. M. Schmidt
file

CRMC-RUCK-016198

July 9, 1958

W. P. S. Breese

Caution Label
Marinite

Following is the wording of the proposed caution label for Marinite sheets which we discussed yesterday.

Caution

Marinite is composed of asbestos fibre and calcium silicate.

Inhalation of dust produced in sawing, drilling or trimming this board may be harmful.

Avoid breathing this dust.

Dust should be kept at a safe minimum by proper controls. If this is impossible, respirators approved by the U. S. Bureau of Mines are recommended.

In my opinion, the use of this label should be given very careful consideration. If we apply it to one of our products such as Marinite, I believe that we would have to apply it on several other products such as Transite, Flexboard and certain pipe covering materials. I believe that such a move should be a policy decision made by our Senior Officers.

Kenneth W. Smith, M.D.

CRMC-RUCK-016199

copy

Division Headquarters
July 29, 1958

D.L. Hinmon

MARINITE DUST

The matter of a caution label on Marinite has been discussed with D. Smith and Mr. Ball. Our discussion covered all board products, not just Marinite.

As Mr. Ball indicated in his letter of July 1, 1958 to T.H. Eaton, the important thing for us to do is provide the employee who is sawing or sanding Marinite - or any board product for that matter - with suitable information so that proper precautions can be taken.

How do we disseminate this information? A label could be used. However, because sheets are sometimes faced with other materials after they leave our plant the label would be covered and not seen by the person doing the fabricating. Where sheets are not faced or painted, many labels would have to be used on both faces to make certain that all persons who cut, sanded and drilled the pieces were suitably warned.

We have many competitors in the board products field. A caution label on our products - and none on theirs would make our selling efforts most difficult. Until the entire industry takes such action, we should consider other means of communicating with the users of our materials.

Mr. Ball's letter of July 1 also indicates that placing a statement in literature does not carry to the employee the information he should have. On most sales promotion pieces and brochures this would be the case. In the case of board products, we have a different type of literature - namely, an instruction book covering cutting, drilling and machining Transite and Ebony products. The purpose of this instruction book is to reach the shop foreman and the man doing the actual work to instruct them on the proper method of handling our materials. This has been in use for several years. It is now being revised to include data on all our other board products. The old instructions carried this note on dry cutting - "In dry cutting there must be available the proper equipment to remove dust"

CRMC-RUCK-016200

When the instruction book is reissued, this statement will be expanded to cover all our board products and will read as follows:

"During cutting, machining, drilling, and sanding operations adequate precautions must be taken to eliminate air contamination by dust resulting from these operations."

In my opinion, the action we have already taken is the most direct means available to warn the person handling our material of the potential danger which he may face if he continues to work in a very dusty atmosphere and breathes the dust. I believe that since our division has already taken some cognizance of this danger through the publication of an instruction of the need to remove dust plus the fact that we are enlarging on this statement in our new literature, represents all of the action which we need to take at this time.

I recommend that Building Products Division be advised of the steps which we have already taken. Since we have taken what I think to be suitable steps on the matter of cautioning the users of our material about dust, I don't believe that any proposal needs to be submitted to the Senior Officers. The only other division involved is Building Products and once they know of our problem they can take similar steps if they feel it is necessary.

W.G. Hoffer

cc: J.B. Jobe
file

6 Aug '58 - Advised that this is only competitive angle. Nothing we can do from a competitive angle. Plan to go ahead as - but a good business ...

HWB

CRMC-RUCK-016201