FILE NAME: Goodyear (GY)

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**Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.**

Goodyear started making asbestos packings around 1915 and made asbestos packings and sheet used for gaskets for at least the next 50 years. Goodyear also made aircraft friction materials. As an industrial user of asbestos raw material, the company was well placed to know when the hazards of asbestos dust became a prominent subject of concern in medicine, industry, and insurance circles in the 1930s.

*Proceedings of the All-Ohio Safety Congress* 1938 list a Goodyear VP, Safety Director, and other official, some presenting at conference where another speaker spoke of asbestos and silica being "known to cause a definite lung disease".

In 1939, several speakers from Goodyear made presentations at the annual meeting of the National Safety Council. Dr. P. A. Davis listed a number of industrial dust diseases of concern, including asbestosis, and described the medical diagnosis and prevention of dust diseases (*Transactions 28th National Safety Congress*, pp. 638-641, 1939). In 1946, the state of Ohio, a major center of the rubber industry, adopted maximum allowable concentrations of industrial air contaminants including asbestos. There were numerous publications of the National Safety Council in the 1930s in which asbestos hazards were discussed, including *Compounding Materials Used in the Rubber Industry* (1938).

An official of the Industrial Commission of Ohio inspected the Goodyear plant in Akron in July 1947, and expressed concern about the use of asbestos in blending operations and worker exposures in cleaning out the dust collector for this process (D. D. Hoffman memo of July 31, 1947). Men were shoveling asbestos from dust collectors into trucks without even wearing respirators. Other toxic hazards were also discussed in the state officials" reports on the Goodyear plant, including lead, benzene and other solvents (Don Hanna memo, May 4, 1948). State officials warned Goodyear that asbestosis had no known cure, informed them the legal maximum allowable concentration was 5 MPPCF and suggested that exposures should be held to "2 million or even less."(Hanna report sent by J Fluyer to Jack Kidney, Goodyear Safety Dir., Sept. 19, 1949).

By 1950, Goodyear provided work clothing and shower facilities to workers handling lead (Don Hanna memo undated, referring to May 1-2, 1950 inspections). State officials reported that a small work force exposed to benzene in the plant had suffered 4 deaths from leukemia between 1958-1961 (D. W. Rumsey and D. Huffman memo, Sept. 29, 1961). There was a strong association of benzene with leukemia in medical literature by this time.

Immediately following the issuance of the OSHA asbestos standard in 1972, a confidential Goodyear memo asked if the brake lining operations complied with regulations (Josvanger memo to PJ Brown, Safety Engr., June 30, 1972) They were not in compliance with the asbestos standard the next month (July 17, 1972 memo to PJ Brown). Goodyear issued a manual of instructions of work with asbestos (C. A. Johnson memo and attachment, July 25, 1972). A consultant evaluation of "Asbestos Hazard" said the Goodyear Aerospace Corporation-Akron plant operation was "exceedingly dirty with asbestos flakes the size of snowflakes drifting through the air in great concentrations." Men shoveling asbestos, transporting it in open bins,

surfaces covered with dust are described. "To achieve anywhere near acceptable concentrations drastic changes will be required in equipment, methods, and housekeeping." (GR Shilling letter, Sept. 5, 1972)

A memo raised concern that unsafe levels of asbestos could arise from cutting compressed sheet with power saws, but reported, without providing exposure measurements, that caution labels were not required on such products (G. E. Horvath memo, Aug. 22, 1973). High fiber counts were recorded in 5 of 6 samples taken in different areas of the GAC plant, 5.1-18.5 f/cc. A 15-point account of the requirements of the OSHA standard followed (G.L. Hess, "Asbestos Survey", to PJ Brown, Oct. 23, 1972). Ohio state officials investigating a compensation case at the Goodyear plant in Akron reported that the claimant had had exposure to fibrous and dust particles for 31 years, including various exposures to asbestos (B. K. McClelland, report on Ruth F. Griffin, Oct. 9, 1975). The plant was considering "discontinuing the use and handling of asbestos for health reasons" in 1976 ("Use of Asbestos -- OSHA Standard 1910-93a," Sept. 15, 1976). Instructions for safeguards in repair of asbestos-insulated equipment and disposal of asbestos waste were specified afterwards by corporate management (R. G. Cummings and E. J. Burkett, memo Dec. 6, 1976; J. L. Holthouser, "Asbestos Handling and Disposal Training Program," Jan. 26, 1982).

Hazards from asbestos in brake linings of curing presses were noted in 1983, at which time instructions were issued to halt the use of compressed air cleaning of motor housings (J. L. Holthouser, "Asbestos Exposures from Motor Brakes," Jan. 31, 1983). Brake asbestos exposure had been noted in 1975 in the report of state officials in the Ruth Griffin compensation case. Goodyear's corporate industrial hygiene manager discussed the revised OSHA asbestos standard with the OSHA Administrator (J. Holthouser, "Revised OSH Asbestos Standards," Jan. 8, 1987). The same official reported that OSHA had imposed a new ceiling limit for short-term exposure of 1 fiber/cc ("OSHA Asbestos Excursion Limit," Oct. 21, 1988).

It can be concluded that Goodyear was well aware of the hazards of asbestos since at least as early as the 1930s, and as an industrial user of asbestos and asbestos products, and a manufacturer of asbestos products, had every reason to stay aware of continuing developments on the published literature on asbestos hazards. It follows that the company had an ethical and moral obligation to warn and protect its employees, contractors, and customers from asbestos hazards in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

The company has filed a number of answers to interrogatories to the effect that Goodyear first learned that breathing asbestos could cause disease in 1972.