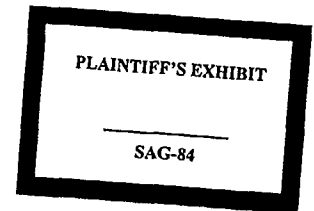


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August 30, 2002

Richard C. Polley, Esq.
Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote
Two PPG Place
Suite 400
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Dear Attorney Polley:

As you requested, I have examined the possible health hazards created by gloves and coats made of woven asbestos fibers. Sometimes this fabric was covered by an aluminized film. Based upon my experience as a Certified Industrial Hygienist, my knowledge of the steel industry, and my review of the relevant test results and literature, my opinion to a reasonable degree of scientific certainty is that there is no health hazard created as a result of the use of asbestos protective gloves and other garments either aluminized or not aluminized.

For several reasons, the variety of asbestos chosen by all manufacturers for gloves, mittens, sleeves, aprons, jackets, coats, leggings, spats and hoods was chrysotile or "white asbestos." That no other available fabric would shield the wearers from flame, radiant, conductive and convective heat as well as could asbestos and also have the flexibility and wear-resistance of asbestos cloth was probably the main consideration.

Garments made of woven chrysotile had many uses, all of which were to shield the wearer from one or more sources of heat at high temperature. This clothing was worn by firefighters, foundrymen, steel mill workers and others in situations where health and even life were at risk. Development of reflective aluminized asbestos fabric dramatically increased the insulation properties of the material especially against radiant heat and also had the effect of encapsulating the asbestos fibers, preventing their release into the air.

Asbestos-based protective garments were uncomfortable to wear at best. They were thicker and heavier than cotton or wool (or, now, plastic fiber) and, thus, were used only when truly necessary; they were never worn casually. Most often, as soon as the hot task had ended the garment(s) was (were) removed. Further, with the possible exception of firefighters, these protective garments were used in relatively large spaces such as

foundries and steel mills where any loose fiber was released only to either drop on the floor if it was large, or to be wafted away in ventilation air currents if it were small.

Published (and unpublished) evaluations of the inhalation hazard potential of fibers released from protective asbestos-based gloves or mittens have found no hazards in real or well-simulated on-the-job work environments. The studies have been of new and used gloves or mittens made of non-aluminized fabrics. In no case has the long-term time-weighted average exposure to asbestos fibers been found to equal or exceed even today's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) standards. The inhalation hazards of asbestos-containing garments were nil.

Very truly yours,



Jack E. Peterson, P.E., Ph.D.
Certified Industrial Hygienist