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PRIVATE

CONFIDENTIAL

GENERAL DYNAMICS / ELECTRIC CORP.

MEMORANDUM

TO: J. J. Gagnon, Dept. 390
FROM: R. H. Secor, Dept. 412
FILE: C-2568
SUBJECT: Insulation Shop Ventilation

DATE: February 1, 1971
412-LS-RHS-71-043

The question regarding company safe practice for the use of asbestos products arose as the result of an MFC request to the Connecticut State Department of Health to investigate our procedures. After surveying our Insulation shop, the state Industrial Hygienist, Mr. John O. Pearson, suggested by letter to this division, that we vacuum clean the shop floors rather than sweep them with a broom. He suggested that we hook into our existing vacuum system; however, our ventilation of this shop consists of local exhaust ventilation which discharges directly into the shipyard atmosphere.

During the last three years, a great deal of attention has been brought to focus on the use of asbestos. The concern for the use of this material has resulted from an increased incidence of mesothelioma, a form of lung cancer.

Very little is known about the mechanism which initiates mesothelioma except that the asbestos fibers migrate to the outer periphery of the lung. Once lodged in the mesothelium, the incubation period may be as long as thirty years before a mesothelioma develops.

The existing ventilation system which was installed in the Insulation shop is the result of having recognized the danger inherent in the use of asbestos-containing materials. It affords the men working in that shop adequate protection from exposure to asbestos fibers.

However, I have suggested to Facilities and Plant Engineering that the existing ventilation system be modified to the extent that a dust collection unit be installed to eliminate the exhaust of asbestos fiber into the shipyard. This suggestion is based upon the fact that we may have created a greater health hazard than the one we tried to eliminate. The lack of response to this complaint will lead to an eventual confrontation with the MFC and I suspect we would be severely criticized by the State Department of Health if this condition was brought to their attention.

Approved: *H. W. Bell*

H. W. Bell

Robert H. Secor
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EXHIBIT

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INVESTIGATION