

Wilson

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'Standards Could Idle Thousands'

The president of B. F. Goodrich's chemical division said today that the proposed standards to govern exposure to vinyl chloride could put 6,500 Goodrich production workers out of work as well as "hundreds of thousands of other employees . . ."

The charge was made by Anton Vittone in a press release announcing the company's "most intensive research and development program in its history" — "a multi-million dollar effort" to reduce the level of vinyl chloride gas lost in manufacturing operations.

AT LEAST seven employees of Goodrich's Louisville plant have contracted a rare liver cancer which has been linked to the chemical used in the plastics industry.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in April imposed temporary standards cutting the permissible resin dust in

working places from 500 to 50 parts per million. Some authorities say the level should be cut to zero.

"The proposed standard of no detectable level of exposure does not appear to be possible with the current state of technology, and, if imposed could displace not only the 6,500 vinyl chloride monomer and polyvinyl chloride (PVC) production workers, but also hundreds of thousands of other employees in the companies which use PVC," said Vittone.

VITTONÉ said several research programs were under way, but that "time is required to break technological barriers . . ." He added, however, that "incremental improvements can be expected on a continuing basis . . ."

In addition to the manufacture of plastics, vinyl chloride is used as a propellant for most household sprays. On May 7, the U. S. Consumer Products Safety Commission said it intends to ban the use of the chemical in sprays.

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