

September 7, 1966

Dr. Rex W. Wilson
The J.F. Goodrich Company
500 South Main Street
Akron, Ohio 44318

Dear Dr. Wilson:

Received your letter of August 24, asking us to further determine if there were any common factors that have been removed from the contacts of Cronin, Golt, Ray, and Skaggs that can explain their improvement, or, in the case of Gibbs, Stokes and Woods, what might have been responsible for their developing as positive cases subsequent to our initial examinations.

I had given this matter a great deal of thought before sending you my letter of August 3, and did not find at that time that I had any information or opinions that were significantly different from those that we had previously considered in prior meetings and discussions. I think that it is obvious from the records, that Cronin, Ray, and Skaggs have shown improvement because they have all been reassigned to jobs which have removed them entirely from intimate contact with any of our chemicals, and in the case of Golt, chemicals used in beam manufacture.

Specifically, from my interpretation of the records, I am still of the opinion that removal from exposure to vinyl acetate and/or tri-chloroethylene has been responsible for their improvement. As you recall from previous meetings, the effects of vinylidene chloride, vinyl acetate and vinyl chloride were discussed. Since vinyl chloride has been used in Louisville since the plant started in 1942, and the first case did not exhibit symptoms until 1958, and that later cases were found in a relatively short period of time, and followed by a number of others, it does not seem likely that vinyl chloride is the culprit. It is true that it may have been possible to have had cases earlier than this that were not diagnosed, however, it does not seem likely, in view of the fact that several of our cases developed within a two-year period and were characterized by such severe disability of the fingers that the subjects were unable to button their shirts or tie their shoes.

BFG 60584

We also came to the conclusion that vinylidene chloride which was an early suspect could not have been responsible, because some of the cases had definitely not been in contact with this material.

In the case of vinyl acetate, all of the subjects had been exposed to this chemical. Its usage was started in 1953, several years before the first case exhibited symptoms and the number of cases were disproportionately distributed in our Plant 2 operation, where the use of this material was large and increasing.

There were a couple of errors in the raw material data which I had sent you previously, and the corrections are as follows. Vinyl acetate and trichloroethylene were used in Building 111, in Plant 1, during the years 1958 through 1964, and these materials were used in Building 121 in Plant 1, during the years 1961 and 1962, in addition to the years 1963 and 1964, which I had previously indicated. This, I think, would further confirm the fact that these materials should be considered prime suspects in these hand cases.

In the cases of Gibbs, Nokes and Woods, Dr. Creech tells me that since all of the X-rays have been sent to you and he did not see the last X-rays, he presently has not made a positive diagnosis in the case of Gibbs and Woods. He stated that Woods did not exhibit any lesions in the bone structure of his fingers, but exhibited only blanching symptoms when exposed to low temperatures.

Gibbs, as you recall, had insisted when he was asked if he would participate in the Cincinnati hospital examination, that his trouble was arthritis and that he had trouble for years with his fingers, wrists, elbows, shoulders, knees and ankles. In the case of Nokes, we all agree that he is a bona-fide case, however, he was not hired until 2/7/62 and did not exhibit symptoms until 2/3/64. I believe he was not diagnosed on the first X-ray simply because his exposure had not been sufficiently long.

All of these latter three are doing work which is not presently bringing them into contact with vinyl acetate or trichloroethylene. It would be interesting to note if the previous X-rays which you have and the X-rays we are now taking will show any improvement in the case of Nokes. I think that there is justification for a more intensive investigation into the effect of vinyl acetate and trichloroethylene in connection with our hand cases. Vinyl acetate usage was started in 1953 and is continuing. Trichloroethylene usage was started in 1955 and is continuing to be used although in smaller quantities than previously and is confined to our Plant 2 operation. We have not used trichloroethylene in Plant 1 since 1964. Both of these materials are used at Niagara Falls and Aven Lake.

Yours very truly,

cc: A. Vittone
W. Baughman
H. McMath

L. E. Crunkleton
Plant Manager

BFG 60585