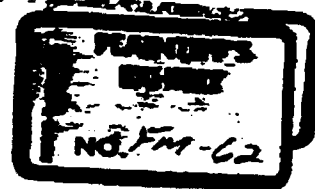


ASBESTOS STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT



Most industrial managers are well aware of the increasing amount of time they must devote to problems relating to occupational and environmental hazards. In recent years new government agencies have been created which have broad powers to investigate, regulate and control industrial operations. During the same period the mandates of traditional agencies also have been broadened in respect to environmental concerns, and frequently there are duplicate and sometimes conflicting functions. Coincidentally, the scientific community has been producing an increasing volume of evidence regarding hitherto unsuspected health hazards associated with various raw materials, chemicals and manufacturing methods.

Adding further to the burdens these developments place on industrial managers is a far more militant union attitude on occupational health matters. Union spokesmen, such as I. W. Abel, Tony Mazzochi and Sheldon Samuels, freely admit they have been negligent in facing these issues in the past. However, recently a new attitude has been in evidence and it is exemplified by Mazzochi's statement that, "We live in a nation of corporate law breakers." Samuels has not been as charitable; he prefers to use the term "Corporate Murderers."

The present union objective, as stated by Mazzochi, is to "use professionals to educate laborers to understand health hazards" and to "use collective bargaining to get legislation necessary to obtain good occupational health care." The AFL-CIO has an active campaign to use the news media to get the message across to the general public as well as to their members.

The friction materials industry position with respect to the asbestos health issue is almost unique. Few other industries are as heavily dependent upon asbestos for the successful performance of their products, and proper handling of occupational and environmental problems associated with the use of asbestos is essential to the survival of manufacturers of asbestos-based friction materials.

During the past year your Asbestos Study Committee has worked closely with OSHA, EPA, NIOSH and their subcontractors as well as with AIA/NA regarding new standards and regarding changes to existing standards and guidelines for regulation of asbestos as well as other materials. We have sought to keep abreast of new information regarding asbestos health effects, control methods and regulations emanating from the medical/scientific communities, various government offices and other sources. The following highlights should be of interest.

OSHA

Proposed new standards for arsenic and for ketones present new formats with emphasis on the action level concept, on work practices and on improved medical surveillance. Expected revisions to the asbestos standard probably will follow one of these formats. Little or no change is expected in permissible airborne concentrations or in monitoring methods.

The erroneous assumption by OSHA that the friction materials industry could immediately comply with the 2 fpcc standard hopefully has been corrected.

FMSI--0201

Hazardous material labeling is under study by an OSHA advisory committee, and labor members have called for changes in asbestos product labeling.

NIOSH

A new electron microscope laboratory has been provided at Cincinnati and is being used to investigate the quantity and size distribution of asbestos fibers and other aerosols in occupational environments. Emphasis is on submicron particles and fibers less than 5 microns long.

EPA

EPA is undertaking a thorough investigation of the presence of asbestos in all areas of the environment. The work involves contract studies, in-house research and joint activities with other government agencies.

There is considerable concern regarding the effectiveness of the "no visible emissions" standard in protecting the public from airborne asbestos. Pressure is on EPA from labor representatives and medical and environmental groups for a "no detectable level" regulation.

EPA proposed waste disposal restrictions would create problems for some friction materials manufacturers.

FDA

A delay has been imposed on FDA's proposal to ban use of asbestos in filters for beverages and food products until they can conduct experiments to determine if long term exposure to ingested asbestos fibers represent a definitive hazard to human health.

A four million dollar animal feeding study has been approved for determination of health effects from ingesting various doses of various kinds of asbestos.

FTC

Study is in progress in response to a petition from CSPI (Nader group) in regard to labeling of asbestos-containing products.

CPSC

There is no known action by this agency in regard to asbestos at this time.

CDC

This agency of HEW has issued a report indicating adverse effects on pulmonary function due to exposure to asbestos at two locations one of which was a textile based friction material plant in New England.

MEDICAL

Selikoff continues predictions of epidemic of asbestos related death and disease in years to come. He emphasizes the mesothelioma hazard and the fact no known dose level is "safe" and is pointing to the possible health significance of shorter, smaller fibers or particles not now covered by standards.

Selikoff people have been actively promoting hazards associated with asbestos emissions from brake lining wear and from brake service operations.

Acknowledgment of association between asbestos exposure and increased GI cancer has become accepted practice during the past year.

The above and other activities and publicity during recent months offers ample evidence that controversy and concern over asbestos has in no way slackened. Many seem to think the fact that OSHA, EPA, NIOSH and others recently have been devoting considerable attention to other toxic materials has taken some of the heat off asbestos. While this may be true as far as the over-all environmental and occupational health picture is concerned, I see no significant change in the attitude of regulatory agencies, medical researchers, labor, or environmental groups in regard to the hazards of asbestos. Nor do I see any justification for such change.

The friction materials industry should pursue all available means for achieving compliance with the 2 fiber per cubic millimeter standard and all other requirements of the OSHA asbestos regulations as promptly as possible. It should be kept in mind the promulgated regulations are a "minimum standard." Wherever possible more protection than that afforded by the standard should be provided for friction materials workers exposed to asbestos dust.

Emphasis should be given to worker instruction and training in methods for reducing airborne dust generation and for minimizing exposure to dust that is generated. Product labeling and other means should be employed to thoroughly inform customers and the public of the dangers associated with improper use, fabrication, handling or disposal of asbestos-containing friction materials. In-plant anti-smoking campaigns would be laudable.

Your committee solicits comments and questions concerning its past and future activities, and will endeavor to follow events in the above mentioned areas and all other aspects of the asbestos/health controversy during the following year.

Respectfully submitted,


I. H. Weaver
Committee Chairman