

FILE NAME: Drywall Spackling Compounds (DWSC)

DATE: 1974 Oct 23

DOC#: DWSC009

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Memo RE National Gypsum Co. - Surprise  
Inspection - from State of Illinois EPA

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: October 23, 1974

MEMO TO: Miles A. Zamco, Surveillance Manager, DAPC

FROM: R. E. Hedden, Region II, DAPC

SUBJECT: NATIONAL GYPSUM CO. - UNANNOUNCED FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION, 10/7/74 (1:47 - 2:50 P.M.)  
Gold Bond Building Products Division  
21800 Maple Street  
Matteson/Cook (60443)

I. D. No. 031 180 AAD

Company Contact: Bruno Miniscalco  
Title: Plant Manager

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of the investigation was to update the enforcement referral I developed dated 2/5/73. The thrust of that referral was the apparent violation of numerous asbestos regulations and the company's lack of an operating permit. The plant manager had previously stated the company was trying to eliminate asbestos from all their products by September, 1973 (refer to page seven of the enforcement referral), and this was also going to be pursued.

Conversation with Plant Manager

On 10/7/74 I was received by Mr. Miniscalco and we had a brief discussion before touring the plant. The following lists the main points of our conversation.

- Asbestos is still being used at the plant in some products.
- Asbestos has been eliminated from the formula of all the textured coatings. Most of these products were applied by spraying by the user.
- Total asbestos use has been reduced by one-half.
- Asbestos has been eliminated from all joint compound mixes sold in retail stores for home use.
- "High-bulking clays" have been substituted for the asbestos fiber.
- Dry wall installers unions in Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska have banned the use of asbestos containing joint compounds in those areas.
- Minnesota has a law that apparently prohibits the use of asbestos in any building products. Miniscalco said the law isn't being enforced though.
- Gold Bond is prepared to eliminate the asbestos from their products now. However, they have met with user resistance. Apparently, a non-asbestos product is somewhat "stiffer" and requires some additional effort to smooth.

EVERY INTER-OFFICE LETTER SHOULD HAVE ONLY ONE SUBJECT.  
ALL LETTERS TO BE SIGNED . . . NO SALUTATION OR COMPLIMENTARY CLOSING NECESSARY.

-The company's major competitors are U. S. Gypsum and Georgia Pacific.

#### PLANT TOUR

##### Ready Mix Joint Compounds

The inspection began with the charge area where the dry materials are placed in the mixer. Numerous broken bags were observed. There was also evidence that waste material was being swept instead of being vacuumed. When Miniscalco was asked about this, he responded that there was too much dust to vacuum-- he said it would take too long! I asked one of the employees what he did with the empty bags: he responded that they put them in plastic bags, carry them to the other end of the plant, and throw them out an opening into a refuse container outside. I asked whether they put any labels on the bags; after some hesitation, he said, "Oh yea," and proceeded to look for them. He was unsuccessful in his search.

##### Dry Mix Joint Compounds and Textured Coatings

In this area, all the dry powder products are manufactured and packaged. As mentioned above, none of the textured coatings contain asbestos, but most of the dry joint compounds still do. During my inspection, an asbestos containing product called "Triple T Compound" was being packaged. There were significant accumulations of waste material on the floor around the bagging machine. Particulate matter was observed suspended in the air and also being exhausted through wall mounted fans. There was evidence in both the charging and bagging area that the floors are swept instead of being vacuumed: several brooms were observed and sweep marks could be seen on the floor in some areas. Miniscalco said the bagging machine operator is not supplied with a change of clothes as are the mixer chargemen.

##### Waste Disposal

An inspection of the company's waste container revealed blatant disregard for Rule 621(d) concerning disposal of asbestos containing wastes. Some empty paper asbestos bags were in plastic bags, but none of those bags contained warning labels. Other bags were observed simply dumped in the refuse container loose. Still other bags containing asbestos had apparently fallen off the overflowing container to the ground. (Note: After completing the plant tour and before I left the site, I drove to the area where the refuse container is kept and took the attached pictures.)

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At the conclusion of the tour we returned to Miniscalco's office where I reviewed each of the apparent violations I observed. I also asked him the nature of the course of instruction given employees relative to asbestos

hazards. He was somewhat vague in his response, but said various pamphlets had been given to the employees. I told him I would make a request for an exact description of the course and the materials used in a follow-up letter. Miniscalco said he was not aware an operating permit was required, in addition to an asbestos permit, for the manufacturing processes.

#### CONCLUSIONS

1. The company is not operating in compliance with the following asbestos rules: 621(a), 621(c), 621(d), 651, 652.
2. The company may not be operating in compliance with Rule 621(b).
3. The company does not have an operating permit for the manufacturing operations as required by Rule 103(b).
4. The company has made a substantial reduction in the total amount of asbestos used in their products.
5. If asbestos-containing joint compounds were prohibited, the company could almost immediately comply with the requirement.
6. The company's attitude has been lackadaisical when it comes to complying with the asbestos regulations.
7. Asbestos is no longer a critical component of joint compounds--only lack of acceptance by the trade prevents the complete elimination of asbestos.
8. The Agency has been remiss in their duty to protect people from hazardous materials. An enforcement should have been filed as soon as the apparent violations were detected: it has now been over a year and one-half since the matter was referred to Enforcement Services.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The attached letter should be sent to the company.
2. An enforcement should be filed immediately.

REH:pjw

cc: Tom Casper, Manager, Enforcement Services Section

Attachments: Letter

Photographs

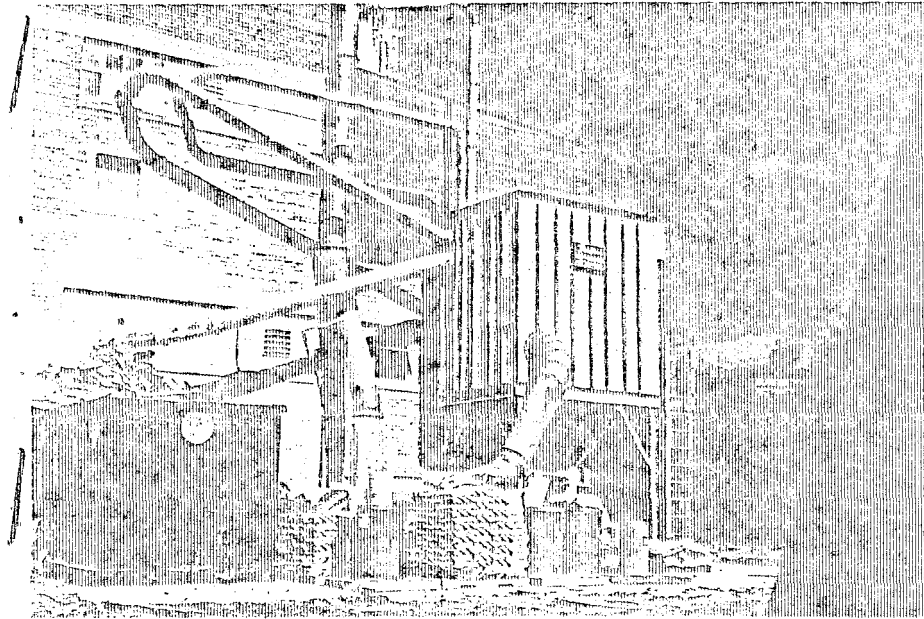


Figure 1. View looking northeast at the southeast corner of the company's plant. The Pangborn baghouse shown in the center of the picture serves the Dry Products area. Note the open windows and exhaust fan to the left of the baghouse.

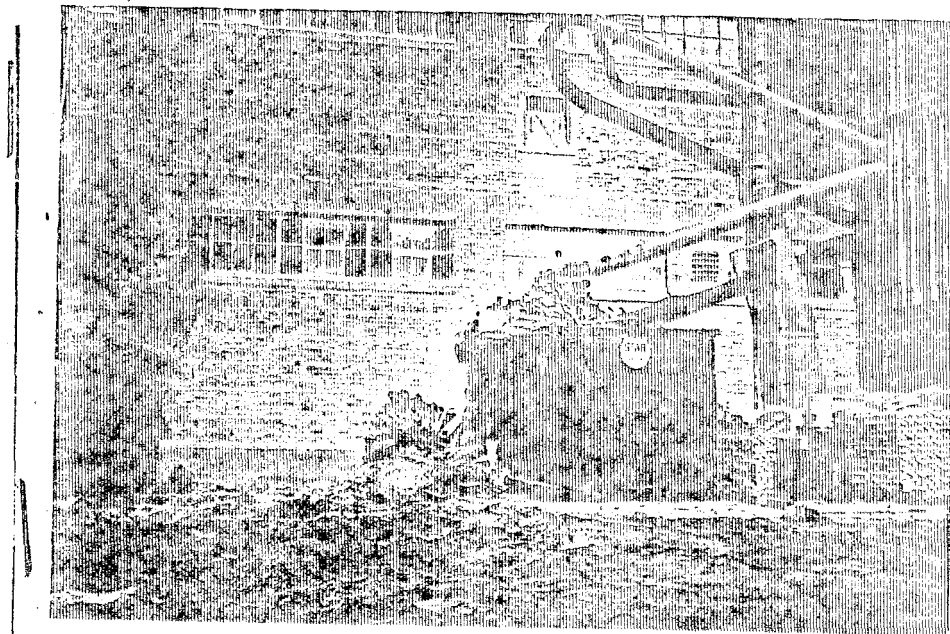


Figure 2. View showing the disheveled condition of the company's refuse container. Empty bags are tossed from the door shown above the container. Note the white dust deposits on the wall and windows. The bags on the ground to the left of the container contained loose asbestos fiber. Fibrous residue was observed strewn on the ground around the refuse container.

# ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

2200 Churchill Road

62706



Springfield, Illinois

Phone: (312) 793-4966

Dr. Richard H. Briceland, Director

PLEASE REPLY TO:

Div. of Air Pollution Control  
Naval Armory  
East Randolph at the Lake  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

October 23, 1974

National Gypsum Co.  
Gold Bond Building Products Division  
21800 Maple Street  
Matteson, Illinois 60443

Attention: Bruno Miniscalco

Dear Mr. Miniscalco:

This will confirm the October 7, 1974 visit to your plant by Mr. R. E. Hedden of this office. The primary purpose of that investigation was to evaluate your present compliance with the asbestos regulations and the conditions under which your asbestos processing permit was granted.

An inspection of your production facilities revealed violations of the following rules: 621(a), 621(c), 621(d), 651(a), 652. It is my understanding that the conditions causing these apparent violations were pointed out to you during the inspection. Further, failure to comply with the conditions attached to your asbestos permit No. A 2 06 002 is grounds for revocation under Rule 103(f).

In addition, the Agency has no record of an operating permit, as required by Rule 103(b), having been granted for your manufacturing operations. (Your present asbestos permit is required in addition to the operating permit.)

In order to evaluate your compliance with Rule 651(b), please describe the exact nature of the course of instruction you have given employees relative to asbestos hazards. Submit copies of all written materials used for this purpose and a list of all employees receiving this course including the date when the course was given.

The condition of your facility during this recent visit, and Mr. Hedden's previous visits on 12/4/72 and 1/17/73, indicate a lackadaisical attitude on your part with respect to the hazards of asbestos. The reduction in use of asbestos fiber achieved at your plant in the past year and Gold Bond's plans to completely eliminate asbestos from all products is commendable; however, as long as asbestos-containing products are manufactured at your Matteson Plant, the applicable rules must be followed.

Under the enforcement provisions of Section 31 of the Environmental Protection Act, the Agency must consider presentation of this matter to the Pollution Control Board for hearing. Violation of any regulation creates a liability for penalty not to exceed \$10,000 for each violation and \$1,000 for each day the violation continues.

If you desire, you may submit in writing any facts which you feel indicate the alledged violations are incorrect, or apprise this office of measures which you will be taking to achieve compliance. As the Agency would like to consider your response before taking further action, please respond before November 13, 1974. To facilitate a timely response from your company, I have sent a copy of this letter directly to Mr. W. A. Schmidt at your Buffalo, New York office.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, do not hesitate to contact this office.

Very truly yours,

C. B. Willard  
Region II Manager

CBW:REH:pjw

cc: W. A. Schmidt, Chief Engineer - Environmental  
Gold Bond Building Products  
325 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14202  
Tom Casper, Manager, Enforcement Services Section, DAPC