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2/L - Freeland

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TO: J. G. PAGE, JR.

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Here is some information you requested recently:

Background Asbestos Air Monitoring

Departmental industrial hygiene coordinators for several departments were contacted to determine what airborne asbestos monitoring has been done in plant process areas where undisturbed asbestos is present. The most extensive study was done at Chambers Works. Several hundred samples were taken across the plant on all shifts. All results were below 0.05 fiber/mL; most were below 0.03 fiber/mL, the sensitivity of the monitoring method. This data is available if needed.

Victoria performed similar sampling in 1978. Forty-two samples were taken in laboratories, office buildings and process areas. Thirty-eight results were reported as nondetected (less than 0.01 fiber/mL). Five were in the range of 0.01 to 0.19 fiber/mL. Three samples were taken in an area where transite was present in 1982. The highest result was 0.01 fiber/mL.

Savannah River Plant has taken several asbestos background samples. They are all reported as nondetected (less than 0.05 fiber/mL).

Several other sites including Cape Fear and Old Hickory have been monitored around the perimeter of asbestos removal operations and have reported results below 0.1 fiber/mL, some below 0.01 fiber/mL.

Buildings

Monitoring is performed routinely under normal conditions in the Fine, Montchanin, Bank of Delaware and Girard Bank buildings. Since 1978 samples have been taken. One sample was reported as 0.02 fiber/mL. No asbestos fibers were detected in any other samples. Sensitivity of the method is 0.01 fiber/mL.

Monitoring is performed when large areas of ceiling tiles are removed. This is done at night and results have been low (less than 0.05 fiber/mL). Monitoring is not done when only a few tiles are removed. This is because such a short time period that the air sample would be too small to achieve reasonable sensitivity.

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No ceiling tiles currently in these buildings are known to contain asbestos. L. V. Thatcher thinks it is possible that some old glued-on ceiling tiles might contain asbestos. This is checked before re-

Monitoring was performed in a Parlin Office Building which has tile walls. No airborne asbestos was detected (i.e., less than 0.1 fiber/mL).

Conclusions

Process area monitoring data indicates there would be very few, if any, sites where sites would have to take additional action in workplaces containing undisturbed asbestos to meet a PEL of 0.1 fiber/mL.

More sites should perform background monitoring in worst case situations to confirm this conclusion. If any workplace is found to exceed 0.1 fiber/mL, action should be taken to meet this level.

Monitoring data for office buildings indicates good control and no problem to meet an exposure limit of 0.1 fiber/mL.

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