

EXHAUSTING ASBESTOS FIBER AND DUST

IN

WIRE INSULATION MANUFACTURE

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When asbestos is used as an insulation agent in the manufacture of wire it enters the plant in a refined form, having been through a previous manufacturing or processing treatment at some asbestos factory, which has conditioned the raw supply of asbestos.

Thus we find two general types of asbestos supply, one the yarn of asbestos in the spool form (to be used for braiding the outside of the finished wire), and the other the batt, or lap, form of asbestos which is loosely wound in a reel (this is the form that is used on the carding machines). High grade asbestos, of long staple and free-from-iron content, is used in wire manufacture intended for electrical insulation.

The wire manufacturer is more concerned with removal of a rather long-stapled waste, than the finer dust particles which are found associated with asbestos-ore processing about the picker-carding machine for example.

However, this asbestos by-product, if allowed to escape into the workroom, would soon float into the far boundaries of the plant and hang like Spanish moss, even from the rafters, and settling on belts, pulleys and equipment. It soon gets beyond the control of good housekeeping if unremoved at its origin. Asbestos has a decided abrasive action and its presence is not beneficial to the long life of plant equipment with which it comes in contact.

The plant procedure of the General Electric Company's wire works at York, Pennsylvania is considered a model in its asbestos waste removal system, and an illustrated description of the processes used, makes up the basis of this Safe Practice Bulletin.