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MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

TO : Director, OESCP

THROUGH : Chief, Industry-Wide Studies Branch

THROUGH : Director, DSHEFS

DATE: March 24, 1977

FROM : Assistant Chief, Industrial Hygiene Section, IWSB, DSHEFS

SUBJECT: Hedman Cationic Fiber

In a previous memo to you dated February 9, 1977, we brought to your attention the possibility that a Canadian company, Hedman Mines Limited, may be marketing an asbestos containing material without proper hazard labeling. Since that time we have obtained additional information.

On March 22 Mr. Stuart Charbula, Vice President of Hedman Mines Limited met with John Dement and Howard Ludwig in Cincinnati. Mr. Charbula stated that Hedman was now labeling their products with the OSHA required label in addition to a label as to asbestos content (label attached). This label has been used since early 1975. Mr. Charbula stated that labeling was initiated after receiving an analytical report concerning their product from a consultant firm (Ontario Research Foundation). Mr. Stuart also indicated that this labeling requirement was discussed with OSHA.

It appears that Hedman is grinding their product to insure that a large majority (98%) of the chrysotile present is shorter than 5 μm in length (the OSHA regulated fiber length). We pointed out to Mr. Charbula that, although the OSHA standard considered only fibers longer than 5 μm, this should not be taken to mean that shorter fibers were not a health hazard as the 5 μm size limit was established only as an "index" of true fiber exposure. We also pointed out that Hedman's discussion of the hazards of asbestos (attached to the February 9 memo) was highly misleading and did not reflect current scientific opinion.

John M. Dement

John M. Dement

cc Ralph Zumwalde