

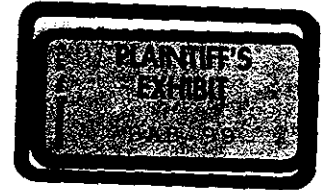


UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IV

345 COURTLAND STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30308

September 14, 1978



Mr. K. C. Kochhar
Senior Facilities Engineer
Babcock & Wilcox
Wilmington, North Carolina 28401

Dear Mr. Kochhar:

We can fully appreciate your concern over the use of asbestos in your facility. This week the Department of Health, Education and Welfare reported a study that indicates that twenty percent of all cancers within the United States are work-related. Asbestos is one of the chemicals of major concern with respect to this trend. In the study it is estimated that since the beginning of World War II, at least four million workers in the U. S. have been heavily exposed to asbestos. According to the study, twenty to twenty-five percent of the persons heavily exposed to asbestos die of lung cancer and another fifteen to twenty percent die of cancer in other parts of the body.

Unfortunately, the consequences of occupational exposure to asbestos have only recently been recognized. Currently, the Office of Toxic Substances, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration are involved in risk assessment studies of asbestos. Any regulatory actions will be based on the results of these studies. Since the results are not yet available, we cannot give you any indication of what type regulatory action will be taken.

We have referred your letter to Mr. Larry Dorsey of the Office of Toxic Substances in Washington, D. C. He is currently involved in the inquiry into asbestos and is better equipped to answer your questions concerning the

impact of asbestos products on man and the environment.

 We have checked EPA reports and have found no studies made specifically for your type of facility regarding the use of asbestos and suggested substitute products.

We are sorry that we cannot give you more complete response. However, as I have stated, this problem has only been recognized and asbestos regulations as well as substitutes for asbestos have not been determined. Your response from Mr. Dorsey should be of greater assistance.

If this agency can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Ralph W. Jennings
Chief

Toxic Substances Section