June 14, 1972

TO: Chicago #131, A. J. Watt
#152, Dr. J. W. Zabor
#170, A. R. Rump
#147-1, C. C. Gramer

FROM: Chicago #198, C. P. Kipp

SUBJECT: Threshold Limit Value - Asbestos

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT USG-527

Attached is an article from the June 7th edition of the Wall Street Journal indicating that effective July 1, 1976 the new threshold limit value for asbestos in a work place will be two fibers per cubic centimeter of air. In the meantime, during the next four years the threshold limit value will continue at five fibers, but there will be a maximum permissible exposure of ten fibers per cubic centimeter at any given time. The prior maximum of ten fibers was a weighted average over a 15 minute period of time.

We are not meeting the five fiber value at some of our locations and it is apparent that the two fiber threshold limit value will require considerable effort on our part to bring ourselves into compliance. There has been a recent revitalization of adverse publicity in regard to asbestos within the last month which coincides with this announced change in the threshold limit value. It is my opinion that the public is becoming more conscience of this problem and I feel we can anticipate difficulties if we do not reconsider our position in reference to labeling products that contain asbestos fiber. Joint treatment is our primary area of concern.

Some labor unions are concerned about the exposure from sanding joints (see attached). In addition to reevaluating our in-plant exposures as a result of the future two fiber threshold limit value, we should reconsider limiting our production to ready-mix and recommend against sanding the product after it is applied. If the sponging method of leveling a joint treated with joint treatment compound is used, this will eliminate the exposure to the applicator of inhaling asbestos fibers.

In view of the fact that new techniques have been developed for counting asbestos fibers and the threshold limit value has been drastically reduced since the last time we measured the dust exposure created by the use of joint compounds, we should give serious consideration to a new set of field tests to measure the exposure to applicators.

The ideal solution would be to eliminate asbestos from our product lines to the maximum degree possible. We therefore recommend Research continue its efforts in this area. I do not know what priority this has at Research, but perhaps this also should be reevaluated.

CPK:rm
Attachments
cc:
Chicago #187, W. R. Hogan
#147-2, R. P. Entz
#170-1, W. W. Holloway
#149, T. S. Snell
#170-6, J. D. Cornell
#151, J. N. Walker
#151, E. Maynard
#147-2, C. M. Howard
#340-1, J. R. Milstead