

OCT 28 1974

Mr. J. D. Link

Pisgah Forest, N. C.

October 16, 1974

Robert P. Stewart

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G. Baldwin, Jr.

W. S. Kaghan

L. Rapoport

VINYLDENE CHLORIDE

Walt Kaghan, Larry Rapoport and I attended a meeting in Wilmington, Delaware, on October 14, 1974, that duPont had set up as a result of recent publicity on vinylidene chloride. Apparently, they felt some urgency in having an industry discussion because of an article in the September 11, 1974, Wall Street Journal, (copy attached). Also attached is a copy of an excerpt on the subject from a recent issue of BNA's Occupational Safety and Health Reporter.

Attending the meeting for duPont:

Dr. E. (Ernie) E. Lewis - (Film Department)

E. R. Kimmel - (Legal Department)

J. J. McCafferty - (Public Affairs)

Attending the meeting for FMC:

Dr. John T. Massengill - (Film R&D)

E. J. (Jack) Hoefer - (Legal Department)

J. A. Youtree - (FDA - Technical)

Steve Downing - (Public Relations - Film Group)

Apparently, duPont personnel have become quite concerned over the possibility of carcinogenic effects being discovered in vinylidene chloride and the widespread publicity that might erupt. Their fears are undoubtedly founded to an extent on the vinyl chloride monomer uproar, and the linking of liver cancer to exposure to VCM; and also the extremely bad publicity Rohm and Haas has received resulting from a number of employees' deaths being attributable to exposure to bis (chloromethyl) ether (BCME).

I gathered that duPont's main worry is the employee-relations or public-relations aspect (i. e., injury or death caused by exposure to VDC), rather than establishment of FDA standards that might limit in some way the use of PVDC as a coating material for cellophane (although the latter is certainly a serious matter of great concern also). This seemed to be FMC's general position also, as expressed by Dr. Massengill. Both these companies

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apparently are planning to follow the lead set by Dow and PPG Industries (the only U. S. manufacturers of VDC) in alerting their employees to recent studies done by an Italian, Professor Viola, who found liver and kidney damage (carcinogenic) from exposure to VDC (10 months' rat-feeding study). Apparently, duPont is also planning to screen all its employees who may have been working with or around VDC or PVDC, and run them through medical tests. Furthermore, duPont plans to reduce exposure limits for VDC monomer in its plants from 10 ppm to 1 ppm over eight hours and 5 ppm over fifteen minutes (the standard set by OSHA for vinyl chloride). Initially this will entail the use of respirators, but eventually duPont plans to modify its operation and equipment so that fresh air masks are not required.

It appears that of the cellophane producers, only duPont and Olin purchase and use VDC monomer - duPont polymerizes its own coating for mylar, and Olin for glassine, polyethylene, etc. All three cellophane manufacturers purchase the material already polymerized for cellophane usage. Very little monomer is left in the polymer we buy, although there are trace amounts (possibly up to 25-30 ppm). This translates to a theoretical possibility of about 2-1/2 ppm in the cellophane itself. duPont takes the position that PVDC coated cellophane is safe, as demonstrated by the Rochester feeding studies in 1949-1952, when no abnormalities were found after feeding PVDC coated cellophane to rats and dogs.

We learned that Dow is planning to have a meeting during the week of November 11th, which the cellophane producers will be invited to attend. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the current situation regarding vinylidene chloride, and what steps are being taken to minimize potential hazards, liabilities, etc. duPont, however, is going ahead full blast with the implementation of its program, without waiting for more information from Dow or anyone else.

As far as Olin is concerned, I feel that for the present, we should continue to treat VDC on a relatively low-key basis. However, we should not tuck the problem under the table and simply hope it will go away. I suggest that a VDC Committee should be appointed to thoroughly look into all aspects of the matter and to come up with recommendations to management as to what steps, if any, should be undertaken regarding VDC - both short range and long range. I suggest that representatives of R&D (Rapoport), Legal (Stewart), and Safety (Roberts), be put on this committee along with one or two members from Production. Representatives from Sales or Public Relations may need to be added later on, but are not needed now.

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