B.F.Goodrich

The B. F. Goodrich Company

500 SOUTH MAIN STREET · AKRON, OHIO 44318

O. PENDLETON THOMAS
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

March 1, 1974

Dear Stockholder:

In connection with our 1973 annual report, we also want to inform you directly about an apparent occupational health problem that has developed at our Louisville (Ky.) polyvinyl chloride operations and to assure you that we are taking urgent corrective action in our continuing operations.

Concerned by the death of an employe from a rare type of liver cancer known as angiosarcoma, our medical personnel learned from a records review that four other plant employes had died of similar causes. We also know of an employe who has been hospitalized with the diagnosis of angiosarcoma.

We promptly began notifying designated state and federal occupational safety and health agencies on January 22, 1974. We also issued a public statement on January 23. We have reviewed these developments with our employes and made subsequent reports to governmental agencies. In addition, we have issued several statements to the news media in an effort to inform our stockholders about this situation as promptly as possible. These events have been reported in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and Business Week magazine, among other national and local publications.

Three deaths resulting from angiosarcoma have been publicly reported in recent days by other polyvinyl chloride manufacturers.

While investigations are continuing, some medical authorities have expressed the belief that vinyl chloride at certain levels of exposure is a carcinogen. Vinyl chloride is the basic material used in the production of polyvinyl chloride plastics.

Although we have always been concerned about the potential toxicity and flammability of vinyl chloride and have taken appropriate precautions in manufacturing operations and work practices, the discovery of these deaths is, to our knowledge, the first evidence implicating vinyl chloride as a cause of human cancer.

We were shocked and saddened by our discovery because the safety of our employes is a basic operating principle in our plants. In fact, our Louisville plant has operated well within previously recognized safety standards.

Since our investigation began, we have adopted self-imposed emergency work practices as a further precaution. Furthermore, we supported reduced levels of exposure proposed by the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board of the Kentucky Department of Labor which is a contract agency for the U. S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). We are also participating in broad surveys being conducted by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the Manufacturing Chemists Association, and we have engaged an independent consulting firm in the field of public and occupational health and safety to assist our medical department in its studies and medical examinations pertaining to the detection and possible treatment of this illness.

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Our current self-imposed emergency exposure limits, which have been achieved over the years with improved technology and systems we developed, are consistent with all available information on vinyl chloride with respect to safety. In addition to our continuing procedures to protect employes, we are also implementing preliminary work practices and monitoring and control procedures recommended on January 31 by NIOSH following their visit with other governmental agencies to the Louisville facility.

A fact-finding hearing on the potential hazards of vinyl chloride in manufacturing was held in Washington, D.C. on February 15, 1974 under the jurisdiction of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the U. S. Department of Labor.

In our statement, B.F.Goodrich reviewed in detail the events that had taken place at Louisville. We also recommended that OSHA, through regular rule-making procedures of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, establish new work practices and necessary limits for vinyl chloride exposure in the work atmosphere. We also pointed out that the clinical evidence associated with the deaths that occurred at Louisville identifies the need for scientific inquiry beyond the experience of any one company or industry group.

Copies of our statement at the above mentioned hearing and one conducted by the State of Kentucky on February 19, 1974 are available to stockholders upon request to:

Department of Environmental Health
The B.F.Goodrich Company
500 South Main Street
Akron, Ohio 44318

Our Company has been commended by government officials, the news media and others for the manner in which we have reported the Louisville situation and for the precautionary measures we have initiated. While our singular concern is the safety of employes, we have accepted these comments from others as recognition of our commitment to resolve this matter.

We will notify you and other stockholders of any significant developments.

Sincerely,

O. Pendleton Thomas

O. Pendleton Thomas, Chairman
and Chief Executive Officer

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