

FILE NAME: Ford (FD)

DATE: 1977 Apr

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Internal Report - Asbestos Usage

Key Issue Report

Subject: Asbestos Usage -1

Background

Ford is essentially out of the asbestos product manufacturing business. A significant number of key components containing asbestos are however purchased from outside suppliers. Many suppliers are becoming increasingly alarmed at the changing OSHA regulations and have already expressed an inability to meet the proposed OSHA limit of 0.5 fibers/cc which is expected to pass by late 1977 or 78. The situation could develop into a serious supply problem for Ford.

Key Factors

- o Tighter OSHA restrictions on airborne asbestos levels in production environments expected in late 1977 or 1978. Will directly affect Ford suppliers.
- o Compliance with this new limit - impossible for some suppliers. Suppliers who can comply predict severe problems with any further restrictions.
- o Discussions going on in Washington to further restrict limit to the lowest measurable level - estimated timing 1979, 1980.
- o Driving force for these projected OSHA changes stems from various studies which indicate that there is no "safe" level of exposure.

Actions

A comprehensive company work plan has been developed (attachment 1) to assess current asbestos usage and determine the abilities of the suppliers to comply with the proposed 0.5 fiber/cc OSHA regulation. The plan includes the establishment of material contingency actions for short-lead items and cooperative development programs for long-lead substitutions.

Status-Work Plan Items

- o Compile comprehensive asbestos components list - complete except Heavy Truck - (attachment 2)
- o Conduct a supplier OSHA compliance ability survey - in progress - (attachment 3)
- o List the cooperative develop programs required for the long lead substitution - preliminary list completed - (attachment 4)
- o First supplier meeting scheduled with Raybestos to discuss relative positions - scheduled for May 11, 1977

Note: For additional background see the Chronology (attachment 5)