



THE INDUSTRIAL
COMMISSION OF OHIO

Richard F. Celeste
Governor

8230 Montgomery Road, Suite 107
Cincinnati, Ohio 45236

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

NAR-214

August 17, 1988

Ms. Judy Spencer
Legal Department
Industrial Commission of Ohio
246 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: OD193988
Employer: North American Refractories Company
Ironton, Ohio
Employee: Ricky Evans

Dear Ms. Spencer:

Ricky Evans is a thirty year-old man who has worked as a laborer and/or truck driver at North American Refractories (NARCO) since 1984.

He is claiming a work-related, noise-induced hearing loss, based upon exposures incurred mostly during the period 1984-1986 and somewhat since. During the 1984-1986 period, his employer was doing some contract construction work at an Armco Plant in Ashland, Ky. At that time, he was a supervisor of a work-crew. This required him to be in the plant for varying amounts of time while work was in progress which would have produced moderate-to-high noise levels.

According to Kim Nelson, Manager of Safety and Health for NARCO, Mr. Evans was supervisor of the job at Armco and frequently drove a truck delivering material to the worksite. Because of this, he was not on the job-site continuously. From 1986, till now, he has been a truck driver only.

Hearing loss can be caused by a variety of factors. There are a number of diseases which can cause temporary and/or permanent hearing loss. Several therapeutic drugs, especially the aureomycin drug group are ototoxic and can cause tinnitus (ringing in the ears). Finally, the most frequent cause of hearing loss is exposure to excessive noise levels. Noise exposure can occur at work or at a wide variety of personal pursuits off the job.

Mr. Evans has a substantial hearing loss in both ears. From the audiogram, it is not possible to tell whether it is noise-induced, or caused by some physiologic problem or

medication. Even if one could determine that it is noise-induced, it is impossible to determine the job contribution and that from the personal lifestyle. There is some evidence in this file that Mr. Evans has a very noisy hobby - motorcycle racing and riding. Racing can be especially noisy as there are generally no mufflers on racing bikes.

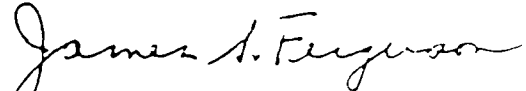
Even if Mr. Evans was exposed to continuous noise on his job, it is unusual for a man of his young age and short noise exposure time, to have as severe a hearing loss as he. In most cases, two years of work-related noise exposure are not sufficient to cause this degree of loss. It is not impossible for this to occur, however, as individual responses to chemical and physical agent exposures vary considerably.

Mr. Evans states in his claim that when he first started the job at Armco Steel, they were given hearing protectors but he did not always use them. Mr. Nelson, the Safety Director, stated that Mr. Evans would not wear the hearing protectors at all, and admits that NARCO did little to enforce wearing them.

In summary, work-related noise-induced hearing loss can not be ruled out, based upon the evidence presented in this claim. It does seem highly unlikely that the short time of Mr. Evans' noise exposure would be responsible for all of his hearing loss.

If I may be of further assistance in this claim, please let me know.

Sincerely,


James S. Ferguson, CIH
Industrial Hygienist

JF:rf