

FILE NAME: Raybestos-Manhattan (RBM)

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter to Dr. Gilson, Hospital in Wales from Raybestos Manhattan RE Assessing the hazards of Asbestosis Exposure and helping

AIR MAIL

October 28, 1974

Dr. J. C. Gilson, Director
MRC Pneumoconiosis Unit
Llandough Hospital
Penarth, CF6 1XW
Glamorgan, Wales

Dear Dr. Gilson:

As I mentioned to you on the telephone I believe we have information in our possession that may be of value to you and your associates in your efforts to develop a dose-response relationship for asbestosis. In addition we have data that may be of help in assessing the special hazards of exposure to crocidolite and amosite.

Our textile plant in Manheim, Pennsylvania processed substantial quantities of amosite during World War II. Crocidolite, in small quantities, was processed between 1939 and 1972. As you are aware, there have been a number of cases of mesothelioma among the Manheim workers.

In contrast we do not know of any cases of mesothelioma among workers at our Charleston, South Carolina textile plant. The Charleston plant has never processed amosite and although small quantities of crocidolite products were on hand at times, processing operations were limited. In addition dust surveys taken during the early 1930's show that dust levels at Manheim were far higher than at Charleston.

Surveys of the Manheim plant were made by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in 1930, 1935, 1938, 1939 and 1943. The Pennsylvania Department of Health made studies in 1934, 1938, 1944, 1947, 1951 and 1954. Additional studies were made by the Industrial Health Foundation in 1944 and 1947. I am sure you are aware of the USPHS study initiated by Dr. Cralley in 1968. We have no information on the results of that study other than the mortality table Dr. Wagoner developed. However, a 1965 USPHS survey of the asbestos textile industry includes the Manheim plant.



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Between 1954 and 1959 and between 1963 and 1967 internal particle counts were made by the impinger method. In 1968 the membrane filter method was introduced and regular surveys were made thereafter.

We have copies of many of the external surveys of Manheim and records of the findings of the others. Similar data is available for Charleston.

Table I summarizes the data in four Metropolitan surveys of Manheim and three Metropolitan and one USPHS survey of Charleston. Much additional data on dust levels is available.

The personnel records at Manheim are not as complete as we would like but we do have work history and cause of death on approximately 50 workers for whom compensation claims were filed between 1948 and the present. Recently five cases of mesothelioma have been discovered. Four of these employees worked in the Packing Mill where crocidolite was braided into packings. I believe there are autopsies in all five cases and presume arrangements can be made through Dr. Krieder, the Manheim Medical Director, for slides to be made available for analysis to determine fiber type.

The Charleston plant has records on the work history and cause of death on all employees who have died since 1953.

A copy of the 1930 Metropolitan survey of Manheim is enclosed. In addition to particle counts it contains descriptions of the operations, temperature and humidity readings, charts on the size distribution of particles, information on physical examinations and some very interesting photographs. The additional surveys on Manheim and Charleston are being duplicated and will be available shortly.

Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions concerning additional data that would be of value.

I definitely plan to arrive in Penarth on Monday evening, November 25, and to spend Tuesday, the 26th, with Dr. Wagner or whomever you designate.

Sincerely,

Enclosures

CC: Messrs. F. S. Daly
R. M. Gordon
J. F. MacLachlan
W. S. Simpson
I. H. Weaver

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