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Job-Safety Unit Sets Tough Rules for '76 On Plants' Asbestos

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL *Staff Reporter*

WASHINGTON — The Occupational Safety and Health Administration announced tough new curbs on asbestos in plants, but gave employers four years to comply.

The new standard will limit concentrations of asbestos in the work place to two fibers per cubic centimeter of air beginning July 1, 1976, the agency administering the new Federal Job Safety Law said.

Until 1976, the asbestos standard will remain five fibers per cubic centimeter. That was the "emergency" standard imposed by the agency last December under pressure from the AFL-CIO.

The inhalation of asbestos has been linked to a number of human diseases, including bronchial cancer.

The standards for asbestos represent a time-weighted average over eight hours. [illegible] starting July 7, 1972, asbestos concentrations aren't to exceed 10 fibers per cubic centimeter of air at any time during the eight-hour period. The emergency standard currently in effect hasn't any such upper limit, only the average of five fibers.

Government sources said the four-year delay in effecting the new standard was to permit employers to design systems to control asbestos. Imposing the new limits more rapidly would have encouraged employers to comply by simply rotating workers during an eight-hour work turn or providing protective breathing devices, government experts believed. Such compliance efforts wouldn't attack the basic problem, they contended.

The Environmental Protection Agency last December banned open-air spraying of [illegible] fireproofing and [illegible] and [illegible] to use [illegible] in the [illegible] of materials [illegible]

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