

FILE NAME: Westinghouse (WH)

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Last Pittsburgh orca

July 24, 1957

Report of Plant Visit

Industrial Relations
Mr. James McElhinney, Safety Supv.

Mr. James McElhinney, Industrial Relations, Mr. C. H. Chance, Manager

Following is a report of my recent visit to your plant:

1. The ventilation on the mica tube rollers in Section A-20 needs to be greatly improved so that the visible fumes that are emitted from the tube rollers will be completely collected with the overhead ventilation hood and removed to the outside of the building. The hoods on these tube rollers should be made much easier to adjust so that the workmen are encouraged to move them into the position where they will efficiently collect fumes after the rolls have been placed into the machine.

There was a definite high frequency noise generated in some of these tube rollers that apparently was being caused by the untreated paper under tension rubbing over a stationary metal roll. It is believed that if the metal rolls over which paper is passing would be turning instead of the paper sliding over them that this noise would be eliminated.

2. The circle saw in Section A-20 that is being used for cutting asbestos board should be very much better ventilated in order to collect the asbestos dust and remove it to a dust collector, even though the operator is wearing a dust respirator. The generation of asbestos dust is excessive and is being scattered on the floor causing undesirable housekeeping and possible exposure to surrounding workers.

It would be highly desirable to use a guard on the circle saw.

3. The ventilation on the slider pot at Col. 21 in Section A-30 was inadequate and should be corrected so that the fumes that are generated will be removed to the outside of the building. It is highly desirable that all such operations be properly ventilated and proper ventilation maintained at all times.

4. The varnish tank at Col. 31 in Section A-30 contains varnish #J-36-5. The caution statement on the material card indicates that this material contains a flammable solvent and that vapor should not be breathed, adequate ventilation shall be provided, and contact with the skin should be avoided. The solvent in this varnish is celuol, which is a highly toxic solvent. For this reason local exhaust ventilation should be placed on this dipping operation as well as on adjacent painting operations in order to remove the toxic fumes from the breathing atmosphere of the operator.

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5. Conveyor spray booth #12560 at Col. 40 Section A-31 had a measured face velocity of only 50 feet per minute, which is only one-third as great as it should be. The minimum face velocity for all spray booths should be 150 ft. per minute in order to remove the toxic solvent vapors and paint spray from the breathing atmosphere of the operators.

A schedule for periodic checking the face velocity for spray booths should be set up. A velometer that is properly calibrated should be used for periodic checking the face velocity of these booths. The best procedure for making this survey would be for the safety engineer to periodically make these measurements and keep a record of all measurements for each spray booth. The frequency of these measurements should be at least every 6 months and more often if there is reason to believe that the ventilation of spray booths is not satisfactorily maintained. Persons that are operating spray booths are exposed to toxic paints and solvents if they are not properly ventilated and are permitted to enter the breathing atmosphere of the spray painter. For this reason paint spray booths present a health hazard unless they are properly maintained and properly ventilated at all times. Usually it is not necessary to supply the paint spray operator with a respirator except in unusual situations such as paint spraying within cabinets, etc., where even the proper face velocity of a spray booth would not be adequate to protect the operator against these toxic solvent vapors and paint mists.

6. A solvent storage room at Col. 40 in Section A-30 has no explosion venting area when the door is closed, since the door that enters the room is presently equipped in such a way that it could not open easily. The present latches should be replaced with explosion latches such as are commonly used on doors for baking ovens. Even then the inertia of this heavy door may not be a satisfactory explosion venting area, but the situation would be greatly remedied over the present situation. Even though this room is provided with exhaust ventilation to the outside of the building, it appears that there was no provision made for intake air into the room except when the door is open. Provision for normal ventilation through the room should be maintained at all times. I believe I am correct in the lack of space for the entrance for air when the door is closed.

7. The glass window in the control booth for the x-ray unit in the Medical Department appears to be ordinary window glass, since it appeared to be only an eighth of an inch thick and did not seem to have visual characteristics for leaded glass. This glass window should be replaced with a quarter inch thick leaded glass that is obtainable from the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. Since this glass is rather expensive, it would appear that the area of this window could be considerably reduced and still offer sufficient vision for the operator.

8. It is important that the chlorinated vapor degreasers be operated according to the instructions that are given in Process Specification 291654 and Safe Practice Data Sheet D-2. During our last Spring Safety Workshop additional information was given with particular emphasis on the need for proper operation of chlorinated solvent degreasers. Trichloroethylene that is used in these degreasers is a highly toxic solvent and that the odor of this solvent should be not more than slightly detectable, and preferably it should be absent from the breathing atmosphere of the operator of the equipment.

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new sets of Safe Practice Path Sheets have been issued to the various testing-house plants. A recent partial survey has indicated that these SPPS are frequently not being used because they are not properly located and have not been sufficiently emphasized for usage by processing personnel and engineers. A strong effort should be made to be sure that SPPS are being used to the fullest extent by way of education of all people concerned with use of toxic and flammable materials.

W. Hilbur Sletcher, Administrator
Industrial Hygiene