ASBESTOS AND FRICTION MATERIALS

Most molded friction materials contain 40% to 60% asbestos - some woven materials over 90%. In molded materials, resin binders prevent the release of asbestos fibers during normal handling. Woven friction materials, normally used only in construction and industrial applications, must be handled with care to avoid creating dust as the asbestos fibers are less firmly bound into the product.

Potentially hazardous airborne concentrations of asbestos dust can be created by improper cleaning and handling of worn brake and clutch assemblies, uncontrolled machining operations and poor housekeeping.

Inhalation of excessive quantities of asbestos fiber can cause respiratory disease and cancer. Smoking greatly increases the risk of lung cancer among asbestos workers. Prevention of asbestos dust exposure is the only known method of eliminating asbestos-related disease among those working with asbestos containing products.

Proper work practices offer the best assurance of providing exposure safeguards for workers removing, installing and machining asbestos containing friction materials.

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