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CEMENT ASB. PRODUCTS CO. ORIGINAL 2A

OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

before the

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

of the

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Docket No.

In the matter of

STANDARD FOR EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS DUST,
PROPOSED RULE MAKING

PUBLIC HEARING

Place: Washington, D.C.

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evidence.)

MR. BEASLEY: My name is W. H. Beasley. I am Manager of Cement Asbestos Products Company, Ragland, Alabama, which is jointly owned by Mead Corporation and American Smelting and Refining Company.

We operate two plants, one at Ragland, Alabama that manufactures A-C pipe, and one at Van Buren, Arkansas that manufactures A-C pipe and PVC pipe.

I am here today to express our concern and interest in the proposed standard for control of asbestos exposure to employees. We are interested in providing a clean and safe environment for our employees. Therefore, we are interested in a standard designed to accomplish this goal .

At the same time, we are opposed to some of the methods used in the proposed standards to reach this goal.

It is apparent to me that there is a need for a standard that would have flexibility enough to fit every industry represented here and still protect the employees included.

For instance, some testimonies have been concerned with fiber levels primarily, while others have a disposal of scraps problem, others mixing operations, some want confidential medical history, some recommend that the employer have access for the benefit of the employee in their particular situation,

and some products may require labeling, some do not, due to their particular physical makeup -- what I am saying is that if we all here have the desire to protect our employees, and at the same time, the desire to be able to continue the operations on a sound business basis for the good of the employees and the companies, then I think this standard can be designed so it will be workable in all different circumstances.

Our concerns are listed in the written testimony submitted, but I would like to emphasize some of the problems peculiar to us.

On the fiber level we recognize the necessity of controlling asbestos dust in our plants, and have endeavored in the past to do so by the use of dust collectors, exhaust and ventilation.

This is an expensive item in our plant costs, but we are desirous of having our employees' environment as clean as possible. We feel that the proposed five fibers level will be extremely difficult to maintain in our operation.

However, if this is the concentration level required to protect our employees, then we accept the challenge to stay within the limits prescribed in paragraph (a) of the emergency standard.

However, the two fiber proposal is considered by our industrial hygienists as an impossibility to achieve and maintain continuously.

With the data available at this time we feel the standards should be set no more than five fibers per cc.

On mixing systems, some have proposed mixing in plastic bags, but it is impossible to mix the quantities used in our operation in bags. This points up the need for wording that would permit mixing by other means as long as they are controlled by the introduction of water or other methods to prevent the dust from becoming airborne.

On disposal, in some operations it may be possible to dispose of waste and scraps in bags or containers, but in our A-C pipe operation a great part of the scraps is in pieces of pipe that cannot be bagged or containerized.

Different treatment should be provided for the various types of scrap.

For instance, scrap that has the fiber locked in, as in A-C pipe and other products that have no danger because of its physical makeup could have their own disposal requirements or be exempt.

We suggest a landfill area.

On labels, we object to labeling all products that contain five percent or more by weight of asbestos as being a health hazard.

For instance, A-C pipe has more than five percent asbestos, but it is locked in and is not released while in service. Many other products fall into this same category,

as testified to in this hearing.

We firmly believe that if we are required to label our pipe as has been proposed, we will be unable to sell our product and would be out of business within two years.

Why should we not set a standard based on facts as they relate to each product involved?

The cost involved in staying within the five fiber limit and complying in these other areas mentioned would be $969,000 initially, and *148,000 annually, assuming it is technically possible.

At this time we have no figures on the two fiber level, if it can be in fact accomplished. These costs may keep us from being able to operate, but if they didn't, labeling, as proposed, would surely put us out of business any way.

Thank you for hearing my testimony, and I am hoping that due consideration will be given to all parties concerned in the writing of the standard and its promulgation.

EXAMINER GOLDBERG: Thank you, Mr. Beasley.

Off the record.

(Discussion off the record.)

EXAMINER GOLDBERG: On the record.

In calling witnesses, we are now in the schedule of the afternoon, and I am favoring people whom I know are from out of town, and would undoubtedly like to get home this evening.