

FILE NAME: ALCOA (ALC)

DATE: 1982 July 06

DOC#: ALC047

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Memo

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1982 July 06

RE: COATINGS AND PAINT CONTAINING CONSTITUENT ASBESTOS

Messrs: T. I. Alkire & H. P. Brueschke
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It is my understanding that asbestos may be a non-essential ingredient in many paints being used only as a filler. Except for acid or heat resistance, asbestos would generally seem to be non-essential for masonry structural coatings. Any non-cellulose filler would therefore suffice.

Some people have wanted to take solace in the safety of asbestos fiber ingredients if they are "encapsulated". This seems to mean different things to different people. One interpretation is that the fibers are entirely encased or surrounded by another material; another definition seems to include if the fibers are simply contained in a tar or resinous binder. While these might be effective means of eliminating fiber dissemination in air during application, spraying, etc., it does not necessarily answer all of the possibilities for potential people exposures. As an example, I would suspect that in the demolition or destruction of masonry buildings which have a dried paint film containing asbestos, we would probably find considerable fiber generation during demolition.

Because of these possibilities, it seems prudent to me that we include paints and coatings in our overall objective to make Alcoa as asbestos free as possible. It is with this purpose in mind that I ask that we try to identify any paints that now contain asbestos that are on the Alcoa approved list and determine if there are safer substitute paints and coatings available.

E. E. RUMBERGER

EEB/eds
Enclosure