

JUL: ~~JUL~~: ~~FOS~~: (RF)
KF: Benzene

TO: Nelson Borys

FROM: J. J. Hall
DATE: August 6, 1984

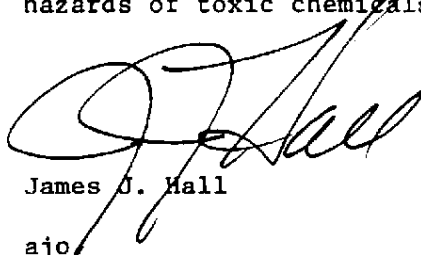
Interoffice
Communication

SUBJ: TOXICITY OF BENZENE

VISTA

Tom Grumbles drafted the attached letter as a proposed response to Dr. Milton J. Rosen's concerns regarding toxicity of benzene.

As we discussed, it is important that Dr. Rosen understand that we in the chemical industry have learned how to control the hazards of toxic chemicals.



James J. Hall

ajo

Attachment

cc WJBV, HWH, OCK, JJL, JRB

VVV 000016378

August 6, 1984

DRAFT

VISTA

Dr. Milton Rosen
Department of Chemistry
Brooklyn College
Brooklyn, NY 11210

Dear Dr. Rosen:

We would like to comment further on your concern regarding the future of LAS production. You indicated this concern was predominately due to the hazards associated with benzene.

We at Vista Chemical, and the chemical industry in general, are well aware of the hazards associated with benzene. There is no argument that benzene has an inherent toxicity. If improperly handled it can produce acute and chronic effects. We also agree that inhalation is the most likely route of exposure. However, as our understanding of the toxicity of benzene has increased over the last decade, our programs and measures taken to control exposures have also increased. Employee monitoring, medical testing and education programs are all designed to keep benzene levels below acceptable exposure limits and even lower where practicable. Due to these measures, we are confident that benzene is handled safely in our plants and employee exposures are well below levels known to potentially cause acute or chronic effects.

This situation is in no way unique to benzene. The chemical industry constantly seeks to learn more about chemicals and has learned how to substantially reduce exposures to all chemicals in the workplace. Vinyl chloride and lead are two examples of chemicals which are handled safely in our plants.

We would be happy to discuss with you further measures taken in our plants to safely handle toxic chemicals. We are confident that we handle benzene in our plants in a manner that will allow the future production of LAS feedstocks without threat to human health or the environment.

Sincerely,

VVV 000016379