



Interoffice Communication

To File
From Tom Grumbles
Date July 7, 1980
Subject PLANT VISIT - PILOT CHEMICAL

Pilot Chemical is a toll processor for N-600 Alkylate, under contract to the WCO division. The N-600 is reacted with a C-10 to C-13 olefin to produce Baltimore Base Oil (BBO). During this process, benzene is produced as a reaction product. Concern has been expressed as to the potential benzene exposures at the plant and it was suggested that the plant be visited to discuss this problem.

On June 30, Doug Micheals and myself, visited the plant and met with Dennis Swift, plant manager, and Ted Dodd, plant chemist. The following items were discussed:

Exposure Standards - The current occupational exposure limit for benzene and other applicable standards relating to benzene exposures were discussed.

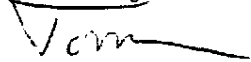
Exposure Measurements - During the last product run, personal samples were taken with 3M OVM's. Approximately thirty samples were taken and analyzed by the Baltimore plant. Unfortunately, these samples were taken for periods ranging from 16 to 40 hours and their validity, for quality control reasons, and usefulness for comparison to exposure standards is questionable.

The plant plans to sample for benzene exposures again during the next product run. Sampling strategy was discussed and a strategy to obtain valid eight-hour samples was agreed upon. These samples will be analyzed by a contract laboratory.

Exposure Sources - It appeared that there is only one operator task that directly results in exposure to benzene. This is an operation where a benzene-water mixture must be drawn off into an openbucket. This normally is done twice a shift and takes about five minutes. It was recommended that respiratory protection be used during this operation. Suitable respirators are available at the plant.

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After these discussions, a walk-through survey of the plant was conducted. The general appearance of the plant and overall housekeeping was good. At this time, it appears Pilot is handling the products and benzene by-products in a safe manner that would preclude any overt exposures, particularly to benzene.


Thomas G. Grumbles

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cc: Doug Micheals
Ed Adams

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