

June 14, 1974

NATIONAL EMISSIONS STANDARDS FOR ASBESTOS

On May 3, 1974 the Federal Register published clarifying revisions to the EPA National Emissions Standards for asbestos. They exempted "fabricating" which would cover the rebuilding or the re-manufacturing of brake shoe assemblies. The definition of manufacturing was clarified to indicate those sources that process commercial asbestos into a product. It does not consider a manufacturer to be one who cuts, shapes, assembles or otherwise alters a manufactured product that contains asbestos. This would leave the rebuilding operation outside of the scope of the national emissions standards for asbestos.

In these clarifying revisions they also give the definition of a visible emission. In essence it was stated that the "no visible emissions" requirement does not apply to uncombined water if that is the sole reason for failure. An additional section on these qualifying revisions was that dealing with disposal of asbestos waste products. The agency will determine whether it is necessary to regulate these sources. No specific statement was made concerning waste disposal practices but the agency did indicate that they were going to look into this problem.

Mr. Weaver advised that the EPA is considering steps to improve on the emissions standards and in particular is considering a numerical standard rather than the "no visible emissions" standard. There is no specific report of progress in this area as regards the EPA Emissions Standards.

STATUS OF THE OSHA REGULATIONS

During the year a suit was brought by the AFL-CIO against the Department of Labor concerning the Occupational Safety & Health Act. Their petition was aimed at strengthening (not weakening) OSHA regulations. The U.S. Court of Appeals rejected their petition for review. In essence the OSHA Regulations stand as they were originally presented.

There is consideration of changing the OSHA Regulations to be more work-practice oriented rather than based on numerical standards. Mr. Weaver advised that the Labor Department no longer plans to completely rewrite the standard. Apparently they will try to work in sections on work practices such as housekeeping, warehousing and other areas. There is very little likelihood of any easing in the two fibers/cc standard that is to go into effect in 1976.

There may be additional recommendations concerning practices to be used when introducing the asbestos fibers into the manufacturing process. In addition they are talking of monitoring techniques, medical surveillance and waste disposal.

In response to a question it was stated that a respirator may be used for interim use when one is working towards getting the work place down to the five fibers/cc limit. However, the respirator is not a permanent solution.

MONITORING METHODS FOR SAMPLING ASBESTOS

A question came up concerning the EPA's measurement of asbestos concentrations in place of the "no visible emissions" standard. Mr. Weaver indicated that the EPA would like to get some kind of a measurement that they could rely on. 94