FILE NAME: Drywall Spackling Compounds (DWSC)

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THOMAS PAINT MANUFACTURING CO.

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C. B. THOMAS
PRESIDENT

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August 16, 1977

Secretary
Consumer Product Safety Commission
Washington, D.C. 20207

We received a letter concerning the proposed ban on the manufacture and sale of consumer patching compounds. I will try to make my reply informative and helpful.

1. I do not believe any of the products currently being sold on the market as "patching compounds" contain any measurable amount of respirable free-form asbestos, so it seems to me that this is much ado about nothing.

2. Even if a patching compound did contain respirable free-form asbestos it would not be used in any quantity by the general public that would begin to rival the effects of cigarettes, which are obviously not banned from the marketplace.

3. In my conversation with someone working on this project, I was given to understand that it was related to joint cement rather than "patching compounds". Joint cement is used to cover tape and nail-heads so that wallboard looks like plaster. The problem as explained to me is with sanding large areas by professionals.

I was also informed that the main problem occurs when someone employed continuously day in and day out as a sander also smokes, and that "lung cancer was not significantly increased among asbestos workers with no history of cigarette smoking."

4. Obviously, there is no hazard from breathing wet material, since there is no dust.

5. The reason for using asbestos in joint cement is to help keep it from cracking at the edge of the tape that joins two pieces of wallboard together.



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6. Actually, the use of asbestos makes the product cost more to make, so no producer would use it if they could make it just as good without asbestos.

7. We made a topping cement that virtually eliminated sanding. It would seem to me to be better to require the professionals to use such a product than to deny consumers the opportunity to avoid unsightly cracks in their walls.

8. Since the only hazard is to the professional user, and then only under special conditions, why bar over the counter sales to the consumer?

9. Since even the professionals who are subjected to the most sanding dust are affected more by smoking, why not ban cigarettes instead?

We have discontinued manufacturing joint cement and we never did use asbestos in spackling compound or patching plaster so our company is not affected by this matter. I am therefore writing as a citizen with knowledge of the subject.

However, as a consumer, I am affected, and I am convinced that your proposed ruling will work to the detriment of the consumer rather than to his advantage.

As a tax-payer and consumer I object to all the money that is spent in penalizing the public in the name of "protection".

Yours sincerely,

C. B. Thomas

CBT/db

CC: Senator Sam Nunn
Senator Herman Talmadge
Representative Wyche Fowler