

1 How do we know that those five reasons
2 really prevent brake and clutch parts from causing
3 mesothelioma?

4 Well, this is probably the central issue of
5 the case.

6 It requires us to go to another branch of
7 science called epidemiology.

8 The dictionary defines epidemiology as
9 simply the science which investigates the causes and
10 control of diseases.

11 So epidemiology is the branch of science
12 devoted to finding out what causes various diseases.

13 In the last several years, epidemiologists
14 have conducted several large scale studies to see if
15 garage workers and brake mechanics are at an increased
16 risk of contracting mesothelioma over or as compared
17 to people who are not exposed to any type of asbestos
18 whatsoever.

19 And what these epidemiologists have found is
20 that garage workers and brake mechanics are at no
21 increased risk for contracting mesothelioma from

1 working with brake and clutch parts.

2 So the epidemiology evidence shows the brake
3 and clutch parts don't cause mesothelioma.

4 But I want to be very clear on one point and
5 that is because you are going to hear testimony during
6 the course of this trial that people who work as
7 mechanics sometimes get mesothelioma.

8 But the evidence that you are going to hear
9 on that point doesn't mean that they got their
10 mesothelioma from brake and clutch parts. Although
11 mesothelioma is a very rare disease, anyone can get
12 it.

13 There have been reported cases of
14 mesothelioma in farmers, dentists, lawyers and even a
15 judge, and none of those cases had any known exposure
16 to asbestos.

17 In fact, in the reported mesothelioma cases
18 that we know of, somewhere between 20 to 40 percent of
19 all mesothelioma cases had no known exposure to
20 asbestos. 20 to 40 percent.

21 What that translates into is one to two out

1 of every five cases. One to two out of every five
2 cases, no known exposure to asbestos.

3 So given those numbers and those
4 percentages, it is not surprising that mechanics just
5 like everyone else, farmers, lawyers and dentists and
6 music teachers sometimes get mesothelioma.

7 What it doesn't mean though is that they got
8 their mesothelioma from brake and clutch parts.

9 All right. That is what we know today.

10 But as you know, we know much more today
11 than we knew 10 or 20 even years ago. Medical science
12 has advanced much further in the last decade or so
13 than we ever thought possible.

14 In the late 1960s and into the 1970, the
15 epidemiology studies about garage mechanics and brake
16 mechanics had not been done, so it remained an open
17 question as to what would cause mesothelioma.

18 At about the same time some of you may
19 recall that asbestos started hitting the news, so what
20 did Ford do about this?

21 Well, although Ford did not manufacture

1 brake and clutch parts that went onto its cars and
2 trucks, it obviously knew that those parts were
3 comprised at least in part of chrysotile asbestos.

4 So when asbestos started hitting the news,
5 Ford decided to do a couple of things.

6 The first thing that Ford did was starting
7 in the late 1960s and carrying into the 1970s, Ford's
8 own research scientists started experiments to see if
9 the braking process and brake repair work would
10 release chrysotile fibers.

11 As I told you, the epidemiology studies
12 weren't in yet, so there really was no firm answer as
13 to whether brake and clutch parts could cause
14 disease.

15 So the Ford scientists started doing
16 experiments and what they found was that almost --
17 that the braking process and brake repair work
18 released almost no chrysotile fibers, and that is
19 because what we talked about earlier, the scientific
20 process behind the braking process. Most of the
21 chrysotile fibers had been converted to forsterite.