

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

To: Ron Williams, Lake
Charles

Date: October 9, 1989

From: L. A. Anderson

Location: General Office

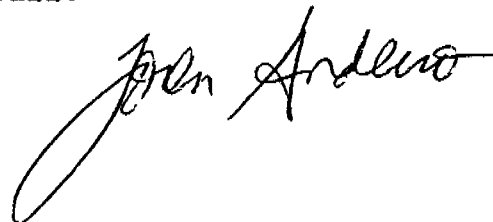
Subject: Respirators and
EDC

Attached is a letter from Mark Sievers at Keller and Heckman regarding respirator use for EDC exposures. It confirms that the protection factor applies to both the 1 PPM TWA and 2 PPM STEL for EDC. This would allow a full face piece respirator equipped with organic vapor cartridges to be used in environments with 100 PPM EDC for up to 15 minutes.

Please keep this correspondence to document this decision in support of your current EDC respirator practices.

If you have questions, please call.

cc. J. Barter



SL 043236

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Mr. Loren Anderson, CIH
PPG Industries, Inc.
1 PPG Place 36W
Pittsburgh, PA 15272

Re: OSHA Clarification on Use of Respirators to
Meet STEL for EDC

Dear Loren:

The purpose of this letter is to confirm our September 28, 1989 discussion regarding the response of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to our request for a clarification of our settlement agreement on the use of respirators to meet the OSHA exposure limits for ethylene dichloride (EDC).

As you know, we sought OSHA's views on the use of air-purifying respirators during maintenance tasks that are less than 15 minutes in duration. During such short-term periods of exposure, the 2 ppm short-term exposure limit (STEL) established by OSHA for EDC would apply rather than the 1 ppm time weighted average (TWA). The discussions leading up to the settlement agreement, however, focused on the 1 ppm TWA for EDC. Thus, the conditions under which respirators could be used to meet the STEL were not addressed explicitly in the agreement.

Under OSHA guidelines, half-mask air-purifying respirators generally cannot be worn when ambient concentrations of a substance are more than 10 times (10x) the TWA for the substance and full-face air-purifying respirators cannot be worn when concentrations are greater than 50 times (50x) the TWA. In applying these protective factors to the 1 ppm TWA for EDC, our agreement with OSHA specifically

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permitted the use of half-mask respirators in ambient concentrations up to 10 ppm and the use of full-mask respirators in concentrations up to 50 ppm. Because of these references to specific concentrations, however, the wording of our agreement with OSHA appears to limit the use of air-purifying respirators to those particular concentrations, regardless of the duration of the exposure.

The question presented to OSHA was whether it shared our belief that the intent of the parties was to similarly apply the 10x and 50x protective factors to the 2 ppm STEL in situations where the STEL would apply, i.e., when exposures would be less than 15 minutes in duration. By applying these factors separately to the STEL, half-mask air-purifying respirators would be permitted for use in concentrations up to 20 ppm and full-mask air-purifying respirators would be permitted for use in concentrations up to 100 ppm when the period of exposure would be less than 15 minutes in duration.

On September 28, I spoke with Chuck James, the attorney in the Solicitor's Office of the U.S. Department of Labor with whom we negotiated the settlement agreement. Mr. James indicated that he had conferred with the responsible OSHA officials who had no objection to our interpretation of the agreement. He was, therefore, able to confirm that the 10x and 50x protective factors would indeed apply separately to the STEL for EDC and that, for short-term exposures of less than 15 minutes, half-mask respirators would be permitted to be used in concentrations up to 20 ppm and full-mask respirators would be permitted for use in concentrations up to 100 ppm.

In light of OSHA's current litigation posture, Mr. James was unwilling to provide a letter explicitly stating this view because of its potential impact on OSHA's discussions with other parties affected by its final PEL rule. He did assure us, however, that this interpretation of our agreement would be properly documented in the files of the Solicitor's Office, that compliance officials in OSHA's field offices would be informed of the interpretation, and that, in the event a company was inadvertently cited for the use of respirators in accordance with this interpretation, the Solicitor's Office would not litigate a case based on the mistaken citation.

In summary, during short-term periods of EDC exposure of less than 15 minutes in duration, when the 2 ppm STEL for EDC applies, half-mask air-purifying respirators may be used in ambient concentrations up to 20 ppm, and full-mask air-purifying respirators may be used in ambient concentrations up to 100 ppm, to meet the STEL.

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We trust that this letter accurately confirms our discussion and is fully responsive to your August 22, 1989 letter. If you should have any questions, or if we can help in any other way, please give us a call.

Best regards.

Cordially yours,



Mark A. Sievers

cc: Robert D. Luss, Esq.
Robert Adams
Larry Thomas
Robert W. Sherman
Meredith Scheck
Richard LaLumondier
Frank Borelli

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