

Law Upheld

Burger added that laws aimed at guarding trade secrets "encourage development and exploitation of items of lesser or different invention might be accorded protection the patent laws, but which items have an important part to play in technological and scientific advancement of the nation."

In the initial district court suit, Kewaskaski asked damages and an injunction against its former employees, alleging they had used secrets such as chemical formulas, manufacturing processes and even customer lists of the company in organizing Bicon 9 for the purpose of competing with Kewaskaski in the production of the synthetic crystals.

The Ohio appeals court reasoned that the state could not grant "monopoly protection" to processes and manufacturing techniques that were patentable at one time but were no longer patentable because they had been in commercial use for a year.

Oil Scheme by Schering

A producer of West Germany, has a scheme to meet the oil shortage of alcohols from coal. The Schering plant prices, it would be uneconomic to produce chemicals during the war, it might be feasible to produce chemicals.

The government has been asked to put some of the money for a pilot plant, cost-110 million German marks, aimed at converting between 30,000 tons and 50,000 of coal a year.

US INCREASE WEIGHED

The German company is also considering boosting its investments in the US due to shifts in the value of the DM, which would lead to a loss of earnings from overseas participation.

These changes have reportedly made the series of US pharmacologists more attractive to Schering, and this, with the high degree of self-sufficiency in raw materials, is prompting the board to look more

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Oil Cuts the Date

Feedstock Hearing

The Federal Energy Office will hold hearings on May 28 and 29 in Washington on the allocation of petroleum feedstocks to synthetic natural gas facilities.

In amending its regulations on May 1, to become effective June 1, FEO indicated its intention to subject Synthetic Natural Gas feedstocks to allocation regulations. They are not now covered.

COATING & PLASTIC MATERIALS

Toxicity Debate Escalates; PVC Men See OSHA Threat

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's proposed permanent standard for levels of vinyl chloride gas in work environments, and its associated medical and supervisory procedures, has made the issue of VC toxicity the first concern of the PVC industry, according to some sources in that industry. The proposal, and its potential impact if formally adopted, has, these sources say, superceded feedstock shortages as the most worrisome challenge faced by the industry.

OSHA's action reflects only one aspect of the current government inquiry into the health threat posed by VC, other research is being conducted by FDA and EPA, but the proposed standard represents the first significant move toward regulation of the chemical intermediate and has thereby magnified and focused the toxicity issue.

Although the proposed regulations apply to "any area or operation in which vinyl chloride is manufactured, reacted, released, repackaged, stored, or used," it is in polymerization facilities where environmental levels of the gas are highest and where the impact of the standard would be

greatest. But PVC is also the heart of VC use, consuming virtually all that is produced and in turn supplying one of the broadest, strongest, and most economical end-use markets in the entire plastics industry. Thus the impact there will be felt with virtually equal force both up and downstream.

The key sentence in the proposed rules is this: "The proposed standard for employee exposure is set at no detectable level, as determined by a sampling and analytical method capable of detecting vinyl chloride at concentrations of 1 ppm with an accuracy of 1ppm plus 50 percent." This supercedes a level of 500 ppm, in effect up until April of this year when an emergency temporary standard of 50 ppm was put into effect.

The Society of the Plastics Industry promptly responded by calling the standard "excessively and unrealistically restrictive." In a statement issued within hours of the proposal, on May 10, SPI said that adoption of the standard "would make it virtually impossible for plants to operate." Spokesmen for a number of PVC producers backed-up SPI's assessment.

One said "nobody can operate at that

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Asarco Going Ahead With Metals Facilities

American Smelting & Refining Company expects to proceed with plans for a 180,000-ton electrolytic zinc facility to be sited in Kentucky. The project, involving investment of about \$150 million, has been complicated by the energy shortage and constraints placed on new power construction due to the government's air pollution regulations, as well as by the US duty on zinc concentrates.

The plant requires a dependable, competitive source of power before it can be sited. Also, it would depend on imports for a little more than 50 percent of its raw material requirements. A US duty of 0.07 cents per pound of contained zinc would be suspended by a bill now in Congress.

A company spokesman says new domestic capacity is urgently needed and estimates the US has lost 50 percent of its zinc

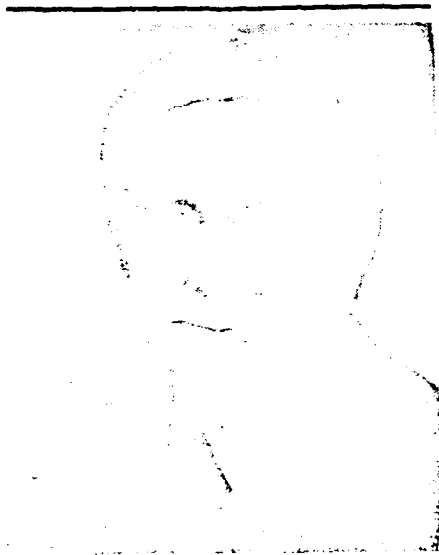
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Texasgulf Halts Project At Kidd Creek

Texasgulf, Inc., has shelved its plan to increase ore production at the Kidd Creek Mine because of uncertainty over Ontario provincial and Canadian

signed to increase ore production from 3.6 to 5 million tons per year at a cost of some \$95 million.

Texasgulf announced at its annual shareholders meeting that it had decided to



BECHTEL OFFICIAL: Robert K. Gould, who has been elected a vice-president of Bechtel, Inc. He will continue as manager of Bechtel's Refinery & Chemical Division.

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Toxicity Debate Continued from Page 5

level," another said, "the disruptions would be enormous." Others said "we'd have to design new plants," "it would shut us down," "you could close the industry down because nobody could operate," "the economic impact would be enormous," and "no exposure would mean no industry." Some others were more reserved. "I don't say it can't be done," one informed source at a large producer said, "but it would be very difficult and expensive. We're quite concerned, but it's part of the cost of doing business."

Goodrich, the major producer of PVC in the world, said in a formal statement that "the 'no detectable level' clause is impractical and not justified," but added that "it intends to continue to operate its plants and meet any reasonable standard." Many producers expressed confidence that the final standard adopted would be above that proposed. Maurice Johnson, M.D., chief medical officer at Goodrich, said last week that Goodrich is currently operating with a work-place environmental level of about 15 ppm at most of its plants.

However, other smaller manufacturers claim they have spent "hundreds of thousands of dollars" just to get beneath the 50 ppm emergency standard, and added that 25-30 ppm would be as low as they could go in the near future. Summing up the industry concern, one informed source said "the question now is 'How do you stay alive?'"

TOO HIGH

Sidney Wolff, M.D., Director of Health Research Group which has been instrumental in pushing government recognition of VC toxicity, has complained that the proposed standard is "too high." He argues that while it "goes in the right direction" and that the non-detectable performance level is proper, the wording of the proposal in effect establishes a threshold level of 1 ppm. He adds that there is "no evidence that any carcinogen is safe at any level." OSHA, he believes, should insist that non-detectable means on instruments of any sensitivity, available now or available in the future. This he says was the intent of NIOSH's recommendations, as well as those of OSHA's own Carcinogen Advisory Committee when it suggested a level of no exposure in January with regard to 14 other suspect-carcinogens that it was convened to study.

Bert Cottine, a staff legal associate at HRG, says that industry always complains it will be put out of business when faced with safety regulations. He suggests that they provide evidence to back-up their claim, that the emphasis be on technical feasibility rather than just economic feasibility, and that each company case be handled individually, with individual evidentiary hearings on hardship, and individual rulings on performance and deadline determinations.

The Organization of Plastic Processors, a Washington group representing plastics fabricators and end-users, had no immediate comment on the OSHA proposal but acting director Michael Lang said that the executive committee had been convened to study the development and establish formal policy toward it. A source close to the group, however, said the OSHA move "is not going to be helpful. It is going to disrupt supplies even further." Then he yielded to the fact: "There is certainly a health problem."

PRIME PIGMENTS

American Cyanamid raised prices on many of its organic and inorganic pigment colors last week, effective May 15. Chrome greens rose 4-7c. to a range of 78-84c. per pound. Chrome yellows increased by 3c. to 59c. per pound, and molybdate orange went up by 5c. to 79c. per pound.

Among the organics, phthalocyanine greens rose 35-65c. to a range of \$5.15-\$5.65 per pound. Phthalocyanine blues increased by 50-75c. to a range of \$4.20-\$4.75 (most at \$4.45)

per pound. BON reds went up by 40c. to a range of, generally, \$3.00-\$3.45 per pound. Diarylide yellows increased 70-75c. to \$3.50-\$3.75 per pound. Hansa yellow went up 20c. to \$3.10 per pound. Benzidine orange rose by 40c. to \$4.80 per pound.

Naphthol reds went up 90c-\$1.40 to a range of \$4.90-\$6.50. And quinacridone red increased by \$1.00 to \$17.00 per pound.

Terms and conditions of sale are unchanged.

ANTIMONY OXIDE—Harshaw Chemical increased prices on antimony oxide last week, effective May 17, but not to the level set by other manufacturers earlier this month. Standard grade was increased by 19½c. per pound to \$1.44 per pound. M&T and NL Industries had earlier raised prices by 36½c. to \$1.61 per pound.

A spokesman for Harshaw said the com-

THIS WEEK'S PRICE CHANGES

Ending May 17, 1974

ADVANCED

Non-

REDUCED

None

COMPARATIVE PRICE INDEXES

	(100=1959 Average)			
Last Week	Prev. Week	Last Month	May 1973	
118.76	118.76	118.74	116.52	

For Current Prices See Page 30

said, "We hope to stabilize it. We don't want a repeat of 1970," he added, when a number of customers were driven away by rapidly rising prices.

CADMIUM PIGMENTS—Effective May 15, Hercules increased the price of its cadmium and "Mercurium" pigments. Cadmium yellow lithopone was increased 22c. to \$2.56 per pound. Cadmium yellow concentrates rose by 53c. to \$6.04 per pound. Cadmium orange lithopone was increased 30c.-34c. to \$3.25-\$3.59 per pound. Cadmium orange concentrates rose 75c.-87c. to \$8.16-\$9.03 per pound. Cadmium reds rose 38c.-59c. to \$4.18-\$5.31 per pound. And cadmium red concentrates increased \$1.02-\$1.38 to \$9.76-\$12.32 per pound.

RED LEAD—NL Industries increased litharge and red lead prices last week, effective May 15, by \$1.50-\$2.00 cwt. Standard litharge is now priced at \$27.25 cwt. 97% red lead is now priced at \$28.50 and 98% red lead is now priced at \$29.00 cwt. Prices are for truckload quantities.

TITANIUM DIOXIDE—Effective May 15, DuPont increased the price of standard grade anatase and rutile titanium dioxide by 3c. per pound. Both anatase and rutile are now priced at the general industry figure of 35c. per pound. Paper grade anatase was increased 2c. to 32c. per pound.

LOW-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE—Effective June 1, Dow will increase its L-DPE prices at about 3c. per pound generally. Film liner will then be priced at 20c. per pound, clarity at 22c. per pound, extrusion coating at 20c. per pound, and g.p. injection molding will also be at 20c. per pound.

HIGH-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE—Monsanto and Dow have both announced that effective June 1 their prices for H-DPE will go up. Monsanto will increase prices by 3c. per pound; blow molding, injection molding, and extrusion grades will be priced at 22c. per pound. Dow will also raise prices by 3c., and both blow molding and injection molding grades will be priced at 21½c. per pound. Dow does not market an extrusion grade.

NAVAL STORES

Rosin sales for the week ending May 17, according to US department of Agriculture sources amounted to 305 drum equivalents compared with 685 the previous week and 594 for the same week last year. Prices paid, according to USDA, for gum

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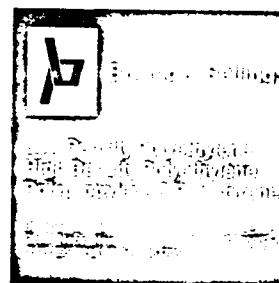
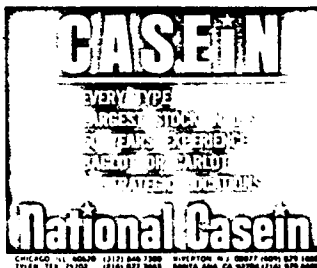
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