

DEPARTMENT OF
SAFETY AND
TECHNICAL EMPLOYMENT

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Salt Lake City, Utah
August 13, 1976

Mr. Douglas Soutar, Vice President
Industrial Relations and Personnel Department
New York Office



VISIT TO EL PASO PLANT - AUGUST 1976

1. Asbestos is a problem in this plant as it is used in several areas and is not being used in an approved manner. Plant personnel should study the standards on asbestos and follow the regulations.

When asbestos is used as caulking material or is being handled or cut, it should be wet with water containing a wetting agent. This reduces the amount of water necessary and makes the asbestos rope and materials easier to handle.

Review all storage of asbestos in all areas in the plant.

Curtains of asbestos material are used in the shop and in other areas. The edges are frayed and we would receive a serious citation when asbestos is used in this manner.

A serious situation exists in the laboratory as asbestos is used on hot plates and on benches and other areas.

The name of a possible substitute material "Refrasil," which is manufactured by Hitco, was discussed with plant personnel and samples of same were ordered for trial immediately.

2. A good program of cable chain inspection and fire extinguisher inspection was in effect in this plant during my last visit. This program needs to be updated as the proper inspection and maintenance and records on same are not being kept up to date on cable and chain slings, fire extinguishers, cranes and other lifting devices.

3. Carbon monoxide detecting devices were purchased for use at the blast furnace, baghouse, and one is also available in the safety office. This equipment is not being used. CO was evident around the blast furnace tuyeres and blast furnace charge floor in amounts above the allowable limits of 50 parts per million for eight hour exposure.)?

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the limit*
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Foremen in these departments, as well as the Safety Department, should check for CO in critical areas on a regular basis and at all times before special work, such as shooting down the blast furnace, takes place.

4. All walkways and stairways should be checked very carefully in the entire plant. Several need repair and replacement. Stairs of the concrete fill type should be replaced with approved tread. These concrete treads are spalling, cracked and broken.

5. In checking the lunchrooms in the plant, they are not up to standard. Lunchrooms should not be swept. They should be either vacuumed or washed and mopped. Dust accumulates on the floor, window ledges and in the general area where men eat their lunch.

The main shop lunchroom is too small. The men are eating their lunches on work benches in the shops and in other areas which could have lead exposure.

6. Housekeeping in the shops, with exception of the carpenter shop, was very poor. A thorough housecleaning and removal of all unused, discarded materials should be completed. Work benches are to be used as work benches and not as storage areas. Areas underneath the work benches should provide proper standing room when men are working on same. An OSHA inspector would certainly cite us for housekeeping contributing to possible accidents in our shop areas.

7. The wooden stands now being used for protection against possible welding sparks or arc flashes are not approved. They are not of proper height and are flammable. There are several brands of approved welding curtains which should be purchased and used throughout the plant as well as in the shop.

8. A program of rehabilitation of the electrical system was started in the plant about four years ago. This program should be started again as there are several violations of electrical standards throughout the plant. In fact, any area in the plant has violations insofar as the electrical code is concerned.

9. At the baghouse, the payloader operator should be equipped with full face piece respirator and certified air supply with demand regulator.

10. It was noted on breathing apparatus that approved airline hose was

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not being used. All hose which involves breathing apparatus should be checked for approval. If it is not approved, replace it immediately.

11. The dross reverb area and operation would not pass OSHA standards. A few problem areas are listed below:

1. Crane
2. Kettle heights
3. Present method of firing kettles and protection against fume accumulation and explosion. This particular area is noticeable to anyone that walks into the plant. I feel quite certain that it will receive special attention from both the physical plant inspector and the health inspector from OSHA.

These recommendations were reviewed with Messrs. Kelly, DeSantis, Scasta and Cheslik. I am sure the recommendations will receive their prompt attention.

REX C. BECKSTEAD

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