



NORTON COMPANY

SAFETY PRODUCTS DIVISION
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MAY 10 1982
Burford W. Culpepper, M.D.

Dr. Burford W. Culpepper
E. I. DuPont de Nemours
ERD N-11400
Wilmington, DE 19898

Dear Dr. Culpepper:

At the request of Mr. John Gillespie, I am sending you this letter and the attached documents in order to reiterate the position Norton Company has taken regarding the use of non-powered air-purifying respirators in asbestos-containing atmospheres.

No non-powered air-purifying respirator totally eliminates asbestos fibers, or any other hazardous materials, from the breathing zone. Negative-pressure respirators provide varying levels of protection to the wearer depending on their design criteria; i.e., a quarter-mask dust/mist respirator provides less protection than does a self-contained breathing apparatus.

The Norton 7170 respirator is approved under TC-21C-170A for use in asbestos-containing atmospheres. However, the filter media used in this or similar dust/mist respirators does not provide the same degree of efficiency of particle removal as does a high-efficiency filter designed for such use in accordance with 30CFR 11.140-11. In addition, none of the NIOSH/MSHA approved respirators manufactured in the industry today for asbestos use were approved by NIOSH with the idea in mind of protecting against mesothelioma or any other types of carcinoma associated with respirable asbestos fibers. In fact, these respirators were approved with the intent of protecting wearers from the possibility of contracting a non-malignant lung disease called asbestosis.

It is Norton Company's policy to recommend to our customers the best respiratory protection available based on the current knowledge level of industrial disease prevention and state-of-the-art respirator technology. The use of high-efficiency filters on an elastomeric facepiece, such as the Norton 7580, represents the best non-powered air-purifying negative-pressure respirator available from any manufacturer for protection from asbestos fibers.

If you have any further questions regarding the position Norton Company has taken regarding the use of non-powered air-purifying respirators in asbestos-containing atmospheres, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours

Thomas B. Fickie
Thomas B. Fickie
Product Manager

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RHitchcock

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