FILE NAME: Newspaper & Magazine Articles (NMA)

DATE: 1970 Apr 13

DOC#: NMA137

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Radio Call-In Transcript - Asbestos Story

RADIO TV REPORTS, INC.

41 EAST 42ND STREET NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017, 687-5100

FOR JOHNS MANVILLE CORP

PROGRAM Brad Crandall Show STATION WNBC

DATE April 13, 1970 - 9:00PM CITY New York

ASBESTOS STORY

CALLER: Last time it was my first call and we spoke of fiberglass and asbestos and I turned on the television and radio today and heard reports that asbestos causes cancer of lungs, not that I am --

BRAD CRANDALL: I remember that we spoke of fiberglass. I don't remember asbestos being ---

CALLER: Yeah, I said, remember, you can dissolve --

CRANDALL: Not that it really matters. The problem is real just the same, whether you and I talked about it or not.

CALLER: I know what it is. I've been in it, I'm associated with it. I said this was the first step, as far as I'm concerned. It's been going on for many, many years and today it came over the air that they would have to put curtains around this stuff, or you'll have to cover it --

CRANDALL: This is why they're spraying it in a congested area.

CALLER: Well, on all construction jobs we use that. I've decided that --

CRANDALL: Well, if you're out in the boon docks somewhere, you wouldn't be breathing it, it wouldn't be a problem. You could mask your workers, 'cause there wouldn't be anybody else around.

CALLER: So long as you're in that building, you're going to breathe it.

CRANDALL: No, no wait a minute.

CALLER: Because you have --

CRANDALL: Wait, wait!

Everything which is sprayed is sprayed in a liquid concentration. The water evaporates and as the water evaporates, many of these products become hard like cement --

CALLER: Asbestos doesn't become hard --

CRANDALL: Well, that's not what the report today said --

CALLER: Well, this is --

CRANDALL: What the report today said was that if you breathe it while it was being sprayed, not forever afterward, etc.

CALLER: Now, they pad it up with a little piece of wood. The thing gets fuzzy and they just sort of pad it. But when construction men work on that and they hang from the ceiling -- see, that goes on before anything is hung up.

CRANDALL: I don't even know what you are talking about. I've lost you.

CALLER: Yeah, well, they spray the asbestos onto the underside of the deck, they call it.

CRANDALL: Uh huh. For what?

CALLER: For insulation between floors.

CRANDALL: Okay.

CALLER: And any type of wiring that's to be hung under that and that we call the hung ceiling below that and that does remain stuffed up there forever. So no matter what you do, what you hit, the stuff rises.

CRANDALL: Well, now, wait a minute, wait a minute. It's between two -- It's between a hard-wood floor, or solid floor in other words.

CALLER: That's right, it's --

CRANDALL: And a suspended ceiling, right?

CALLER: Right.

CRANDALL: And it was sprayed in there in liquid form and then it hardens, right?

CALLER: It's sprayed just like a fuzz and it's just -- you might as well say it is an adhesive, you know.

CRANDALL: Well, an adhesive is exactly what we are talking about. It's sprayed to an adhesive, then it's not going to drift around loose.

CALLER: But it does. It doesn't bind that well.

CRANDALL: Between the two floors?

CALLER: Right. And then you have the pile ceiling. You know, they just lay it in there and it's an abridge, it's just a mason abridge. But any work that's to be done in the ceiling, all the utilities and piping and sprinkling and ductwork and lighting, well, that is all hung in there afterwards. In other words, you've got to drill the hole --

CRANDALL: Do you go up there, do you go up there and drill through that stuff and breathe it, right?

CALLER: Right, right, that's -- like I say, it's continuously there.

CRANDALL: Well, now, don't the men who work wear any kind of protective mask on it?

CALLER: Only those who install it.

CRANDALL: I see, nobody else?

CALLER: Nobody else. I have said that, I have claimed that if emphysema(?) was caused by that stuff, they say cancer, it causes emphysema too I imagine, but uh, I'm glad, like I say, that it's finally -- somebody stepped out and passed a law and they say that if they don't comply with it they're going to seal their machinery.

CRANDALL: Well, that's groovy as far as the ordinary joe is concerned, but it doesn't help the man on the job any.

CALLER: Uh, it does in a way. At least there's -- somebody's concerned. That's what's passed. But any dust laying on remains in that building, see? And any movement of air carries that dust.

CRANDALL: Well, how can there be a movement of air between the two layers of the ceiling?

CALLER: They don't have a return air. They use the whole ceiling as a return air system.

CRANDALL: You mean they don't have a duct then. They just use the space between the two?

CALLER: They have a duct for the supply only.

CRANDALL: I see.

CALLER: But the return goes through the -- what we call a perforated acoustic ceiling, or unless they just, it gets around the lighting or the grid, you know, the minimal space --

CRANDALL: Does it pass trhough a filter system before it comes back out again?

CALLER: Sure. It's a fiberglass filter system.

CRANDALL: Well, won't it trap most of that stuff out of the air?

CALLER: Well, it does, but then, you know, fiberglass is the same thing. See, those filters are fiberglass. You may have fiberglass in your own home.

CRANDALL: Yeah, I know. Well, it's an identical system. So, the point is, fiberglass is not lucretia borzia, fiberglass is an inert substance that sometimes is good, sometimes is bad, depending on whether it's controlled, so if you've got a controlled usage, that's one thing, if you've got an uncontrolled usage, that's another thing.

CALLER: No, I like it behind a wall, where a wall seals insulation, the wall is sealed forever and it does its job.

CRANDALL: Yeah. What about in filters with air passing through it? How much do you lose in the way of, let's say, small particles?

CALLER: Well, the filter is under air pressure, just like you blow an air hose at it, it never stops.

CRANDALL: Yeah, I know.

CALLER: It never stops.

CRANDALL: Yeah I know that.

CALLER: So, you can take it from there.

CRANDALL: You know, that doesn't tell me whether -- and the extent to which there are small particles breaking off from that air pressure.

CALLER: You take a brand new one and you hold it into the ray of light and just tap it against the side of your hand.

CRANDALL: Uh huh.

CALLER: That's just about the best way I know to put it.

CRANDALL: And you start getting the loose particles, huh?

CALLER: Well, you know how infinitesimal particles will show up in sunlight. Well, that's all you have to do. And then you can find out for yourself. Not with an old one, but with a brand new one.

CRANDALL: Let me ask you a question. An awful lot of people with forced air heat use fiberglass filters through their re-circulation system, as you know.

CALLER: That is correct.

CRANDALL: Would you suggest they find some other filter material?

CALLER: There is other filtering material. There's plastic, there's aluminum grid.

CRANDALL: Yeah, but what's the plastic, if it isn't fiber-glass?

CALLER: Plastic doesn't have foam polyesther, I guess.

CRANDALL: Some darn thing though, isn't it? If it's in fiber form you're going to wind up breathing it anyhow.

CALLER: Well, nylon isn't sharp.

CRANDALL: No, well, that's true enough.

CALLER: Understand? There is a difference.

CRANDALL: No, neither is --

CALLER: So, over a time, that nylon or any of them will dissolve in the system.

CRANDALL: Yeah, or even if it doesn't, it doesn't have sharp edges anyhow, you know, like polyurethane --

CALLER: Well, what I'm talking about is, it doesn't irritate you to the point of a cough, understand?

CRANDALL: Yeah.

CALLER: That's the part. We inhale a lot of things everyday, all day.

CRANDALL: That's for sure.

CALLER: But we're not coughing, you know, constantly. On the other hand, anything that is, aggravates, cause like you say, handle a piece of fiberglass in your hands and it will sting --

CRANDALL: Yeah, it will cut you up, there's no question.

CALLER: Well, that's the difference. You can handle nylon fibers, they have them in cotton, they have paper type, it's the same as an automobile filter, it's a fan(?) of a paper type. Well, there are many types. Some of them have a washable filter. It's uh, oh I think it's about 4 inches thick, it's made out of spongy nylon, and you can wash it out, the same as the aluminum one. They have an aluminum grid, it's oh, something like steel wool, but it's aluminum, you take it in your bathroom and you wash it down with a spray hose.

CRANDALL: Would that be any better?

CALLER: Well, as far as I'm concerned, it's a--

CRANDALL: Well, it seems to me like inhaling little chunks of fiberglass or inhaling little chunks of aluminum is --

CALLER: I don't think there are any chunks in aluminum, because it doesn't come that small.

CRANDALL: Well, you said like steel wool. That's --

CALLER: Well, that's sort of -- but you know, it's much [illegible], see. I know, some of them, they have adhesive on, but I don't think they use them for houses, that's more commercial.

CRANDALL: Okay, sir, thank you. Nice talking to you. Take care.