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C O P Y

Seattle, Washington
June 14, 1943

Mr. John E. Morgan, Supervisor of Safety
Department of Labor & Industries
State of Washington
Olympia, Washington

RE: Proposed General Safety Standards -
Standard 49, Article A-5, ASBESTOSIS

Dear Mr. Morgan:

Our Association has given due consideration to the above mentioned subject and submit to you the following recommendations.

Inasmuch as any dust which might occur in any of our operations during the application of material in which asbestos might be used is not of any different character from the ordinary dust that is developed in thousands of occupations, we feel that it is adequately classified under Standard 45 in the general classification of "Hazards and Protective Devices." The relative quantity of asbestos in the materials that use the name "asbestos" is quite small. As a matter of fact, magnesia is 85% of most of the pipe covering which is generally referred to as asbestos amongest those uninformed.

In our entire practice of handling asbestos in the State of Washington, amd our Association members have been in this business over 40 years, we have no knowledge of anyone who is even acquainted with the coined word "Asbestosis" much less ever having contracted the disease. We feel that if such a so-called disease were advertised to the general public, and our workmen in particular, that it would give them an excuse upon which to place claims for all sorts of allied ailments and our particular industry would be unduly burdened by such parasites.

Our Committee, consisting of Mr. V. S. Jenkins and Mr. T. F. Bellamy, who were interviewed by John E. Morgan and Herman Luft at the Smith Tower offices of the Department of Labor & Industries, report that the recorded singular case of Asbestosis as noted in the medical journals occurred in England some 40 or 50 years ago under must unsanitary and inhuman working conditions. Since this foreign disease has not come to our attention, we feel it should be left in Europe where it belongs and not brought to our local communities and create hysteria and fear amongest the families of our contented workmen who are now enjoying good health and living to a ripe old age, which is significant of the Pipe Coverers Union as compared with the other trades.

These statistics of your Department confirm the soundness of this argument by the low rate which we have, and we wish to continue enjoying this low rate by not allowing our standards to be adulterated. Therefore, we heartily recommend that this entire Paragraph A-5 be deleted from your code, and pledge our cooperation to your Safety Standards, which as we interpret them, is using good common sense on all occasions.

On all our operations where the slightest amount of dust might arise from any sawing, your representative will concur that we have proper ventilation and respiratory devices. However, when it comes to installing our material in cramped quarters of war vessels, we have proven that it is of more value to consider safety in regard to giving a man proper vision and not allowing him to be encumbered with respirators, air hosers, hoods, etc.

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Looking to you for favorable action on this matter, we remain

Very truly yours

NORTHWEST MAGNESIA ASSOCIATION

Elliott DeForest
Secretary