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KAISER CEMENT & GYPSUM CORPORATION

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO G. C. Davis

DATE May 12, 1972

J.C. McCoe

COPIES TO

FROM J. C. McCoe

SUBJECT REPLACEMENT OF ASBESTOS IN PLASTIC AND GUN PLASTIC CEMENTS

Due to the increased adverse publicity of possible detrimental health effect to workers from use of asbestos building products, I circulated several memos to company personnel requesting an investigation to find a substitute for asbestos in our plastic and gun plastic cements. Asbestos serves a dual purpose in these cements. It functions as a lubricity in gun plastic to facilitate pumping, as well as increases cohesiveness which facilitates placement on vertical wall surfaces.

J. Post has furnished me with a copy of a brief report dated March 10, 1972, from Phil Westfall which states:

"Among the possible replacements evaluated were coarse and fine wood fibers, pressed polystyrene beads, diatomaceous earth, Methocel (a methylcellulose polymer), latex and vermiculite. The cement with Methocel replacing the asbestos exhibited cohesiveness and lubricity, both of which are desirable characteristics for a plastic or gun plastic cement. However, a substantial strength reduction was realized upon replacing the asbestos with Methocel*. None of the other materials evaluated when interground with cement produced a cement which approached the laboratory ground gun plastic."

*Note: Strength reductions were too major for consumer acceptance. These approximated a 76% reduction at 1 and 7 days, 80% at 7 days.

This means they have not located a satisfactory substitute. I recommended to J. Post they evaluate use of limestone chips as a substitute. The quality or quantity of limestone at Permanente may not make this feasible.

Regardless, I feel this matter should be brought to the attention of our lawyers in the event we may sometime have legal action instituted by someone using the cement.

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