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DATE: 1956 Feb 29

DOC#: AH020

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Memo

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT
SF 592

February 29, 1956

Memorandum Regarding
Environmental Dust Survey for
Asbestos Textile Institute

In his letter of January 5, 1956, Mr. D. R. Holmes, Chairman, Air Hygiene Committee, Asbestos Textile Institute, asked the Foundation the cost and time it would take to make a dust survey at the same stations in each plant as were used in the last survey for the Institute. The previous investigation made by the Foundation was a preliminary study with the object of defining the specific nature and the magnitude of the problem. The study consisted mainly of inspections of the plants with a limited number of dust counts, as most of the plants had data available from other dust-count surveys.

With regard to a dust survey at the present time, the Foundation would collect samples and make dust counts for all the plants involved and base its suggestions and recommendations on the results of their own study.

In conducting the dust sampling and counting, the Foundation would use the impinger apparatus and the commonly accepted counting technique used for silica dust. It is recognized that there

is controversy regarding the mechanism of action of asbestos particulate matter. It is assumed by some that the effects are due to fibers; hence counting particles would not give a satisfactory measure of the hazard. On the other hand, there is some evidence that fine particles also may produce injurious effects. There is no method available for determining quantitatively the number of fibers present in an airborne sample, and further, there are no data on which to interpret the findings of fiber counts, even though a method were available. Hence the impinger is selected as the only practical method readily available for a routine study.

The results obtained by the impinger cannot be interpreted directly in terms of potential injurious effects, owing to lack of information on the physiological effects of asbestos. However, the results should provide an index of dustiness and indicate the efficacy of present control measures and the need for improvement in those areas which are excessively dusty.

From the information enclosed with Mr. Holmes' letter of February 15, 1956, it is noted that six plants are involved. It is also noted that certain sampling stations have been chosen. While

the Foundation will follow the suggestions of the companies in general with regard to sampling locations, it would feel free to select sampling locations which it was felt would give a better evaluation of dust exposure.

The estimated cost of the survey is $6,000 to $7,500 plus travel expenses. A range is given rather than a single figure owing to the fact that it is difficult to give a precise figure without having made a personal visit to each plant.

[redacted]