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Letter to Customers



Johns-Manville

Internal Correspondence

To Dr. Paul Kotin
J. A. McKinney

Date February 3, 1976

From M. Harris

Copies: N. W. Hendry

Subject A STATEMENT OF POLICY RELATING TO
ASBESTOS FIBER SALES

Attached is a draft letter to one of our customers, as well as a "Statement of Policy on Asbestos Fiber Sales" from N. W. Hendry.

I would appreciate your comments as soon as possible, as we intend to send this letter and statement to each of our asbestos fiber customers throughout the world, as well as to our asbestos fiber users who are not customers.

MH:cn
Attach:

Mr. G. H. Lovegrove
Director of Purchasing
The Bendix Corp.
Friction Materials Div.
P. O. Box 238
Troy, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Lovegrove:

In view of recent developments relating to the submission of sales contracts by certain asbestos producers in Canada, with a clause relating to Purchaser's liability, the proposal by OSHA to reduce asbestos fiber exposure in plants to 0.5 fibers/c.c. and the growing number of legal suits from and by workers exposed to asbestos, we believe it is essential for us to issue a policy statement on behalf of Johns-Manville reflecting our viewpoint on asbestos fiber sales now and in the future.

We have attached the J.M. policy for your information and guidance.

JOHNS-MANVILLE POLICY STATEMENT ON SALES OF
ASBESTOS FIBER WORLDWIDE

Johns-Manville is Canada's largest producer of chrysotile asbestos with a projected production level in 1976 of 720,000 tons at the Jeffrey mine and 80,000 tons at the Advocate mine. Also, J.M. is the largest single consumer of asbestos in the U.S. and Canada in the manufacture of asbestos containing products.

It is apparent, then, that asbestos fiber is of great importance to Johns-Manville, first to supply this essential mineral to industry and second to manufacture products with it internally.

The corporate policy of Johns-Manville on environmental health is stated as follows:

"It is our Company's policy to equip our plants for the highest degree of personal safety ---- providing it is technically possible and economically feasible to do so. When technology is not available ---- or when it is not feasible economically from a competitive standpoint to make these installations ---- we will elect to discontinue a particular operation rather than knowingly endanger the health or life expectancy of a single employee."

We are convinced that asbestos fiber can be produced and used safely and we are installing equipment and expending funds at our asbestos mines and asbestos using plants to meet this objective. Further, we are convinced that liability suits will diminish and eventually disappear as employee exposure to asbestos fiber is reduced to safe

levels; we consider it morally wrong to attempt to pass on to our customers the liability responsibility for our asbestos fiber.

In addition, we are expanding our asbestos production in 1976 at Jeffrey mine and allocating additional funds for the purpose of finding and bringing to production new asbestos mines to alleviate the present and future shortages.

Based on this preamble, we can state the Johns-Manville sales policy, as follows:

- 1) We will continue to produce and market asbestos fiber on a worldwide basis as we have in the past and we will not ask our customers to accept the health liability resulting from the use of our asbestos fiber.
- 2) As in the past, we will continue to inform, educate and provide all manner of information to our customers for the safe use of asbestos, and we will insist that our customers adhere to existing federal or state regulations relating to the use of asbestos and that they inform and educate their employees on the safe use of asbestos.
- 3) We will reserve the right to refuse to sell asbestos fiber to customers who take no action or not sufficient action to meet the existing regulations on asbestos exposure and thereby endanger or shorten the lives of their employees.

- 4) We will continue to search for and implement improved methods of packaging and shipping asbestos to our customers and to develop new and improved forms, such as blocks and pellets, to improve the condition of arrival and to eliminate any problem of excess exposure to asbestos which can result from handling the product in the form in which we ship it.