FILE NAME: Visible Dust (VDT)

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IN THE AIRBORNE

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ASBESTOS

Asbestos is used in many varied forms such as board, cloth, fiber, rope packing, sleeving, tape, twine, yarn, sheet, and in other numerous combinations. The manner of storage depends upon the form of asbestos. Where the asbestos may possibly be in a loose form during storage, a dusty condition could be produced and proper ventilation should be provided.

PROPERTIES

FIRE - Non-flammable.

EXPLOSION - Non-explosive.

BREATHING - Dust from asbestos materials may produce a chronic lung disease if it is breathed in sufficient concentrations over a period of years. In some persons, the disease may develop much more rapidly than in others. The concentration and particle size of the dust will also influence the number of years of exposure required to produce the disease. In any case, exposure even to high concentrations of asbestos dust for a period of a few days or even a few months will not produce the disease. Particles larger than about 10 microns (0.000039 in.) cannot get into the small lung air sacs to cause damage. Such small particles are far below the size which is visible to the naked eye. Most dusts, however, have particles of a large range of sizes which vary from visible to invisible. It is only the fine invisible dust particles that are effective in producing asbestosis.

Where people may breathe the dust, the Maximum Allowable Concentration is 5 million particles per cubic foot of air, unless the exposure is for less than one hour per day, in which case a slightly higher concentration may be permitted but must not exceed 10 million particles per cubic foot. These Maximum Allowable Concentrations apply to repeated or recurring daily exposures. Where asbestos may be mixed with other less harmful dusts, the concentration of asbestos dust will be the controlling factor. The asbestos dust concentration can be determined by collecting and analyzing air samples.

SKIN IRRITATION - Asbestos is usually not a skin irritant.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

WHEN IT IS NECESSARY TO WORK IN AN AREA CONTAINING HIGH DUST CONCENTRATIONS, AN AIR-LINE RESPIRATOR OR HOSE MASK WITH OR WITHOUT A BLOWER MAY BE USED. The air-line respirator should have 8 to 15 lbs/sq.in. pressure. Care should be taken so that contaminated air does not enter the hose for the hose mask.

For medium dust concentrations, the standard all dust respirator 8883-5, equipped with filter 8883-6, may be used. Filters should be replaced according to a predetermined schedule or at any time breathing becomes difficult.

All respirators and replacement parts should have the Bureau of Mines approval which is indicated by a label on larger parts or BM#_____(approval number) on smaller parts.

PRECAUTIONS

A PERSON SHOULD NOT ENTER AN AREA CONTAINING AN EXTREMELY HIGH CONCENTRATION OF ASBESTOS DUST FOR A PROLONGED PERIOD OF TIME WITHOUT ADEQUATE PROTECTION. THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE CONCENTRATION

WHEN IN DOUBT
CONSULT MEDICAL OR SAFETY DEPARTMENT

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