



A/C Pipe
Producers Association

~~H. Beasley~~
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Internal Correspondence

JFB
10-6-82

DATE September 28, 1982

TO Executive Committee

J.F. Welch

J.F. Welch, Vice President

SUBJECT State of Arizona - News Articles on Asbestos

Action Required: Review for information

Brown & Bain, AACPP special counsel in Arizona, reported that on September 12-16, the Arizona Republic (the State's largest newspaper) ran a five-part investigative series on asbestos. Only a very small part of the series was devoted to A/C water pipe (see enclosure). The comments of the Phoenix Water and Sewer Department could not have been more positive.

Special counsel will monitor the impact of the series, particularly in the Phoenix area where the Assistant Director of Water Operations was interviewed by Republic reporters. No contacts will be made with City officials unless so requested by member companies.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

JFW/ccw

Enclosure

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manufacturers of asbestos seek recovery of the. That course of action d by U.S. Attorney in French Smith in a d report to Congress in

tion of asbestos in s only to elementary ools. It says nothing and universities. students in ASU's 15- nita Hall are being bestos fibers from the ways, dormitory rooms

are within easy reach d show signs of damage s. Tests of the ceiling EM/TEC Laboratories de for The Republic tains up to 5 percent ough to constitute a h hazard. , project manager for ties at ASU, said he there is asbestos in the anzanita. He said the no plans to remove buildings or to identify ave been used. tarded residents of the ing Program also are bestos in their class- by rooms and living

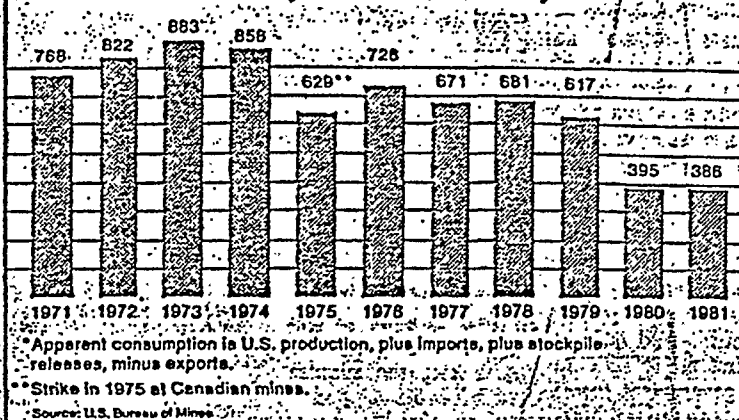
officials found asbes- Tucson and Phoenix years ago and recom- t be removed. But the jected budget requests 1981 for more than remove the material. d they were uncertain evels of asbestos expo- dings pose a hazard.

Department of Eco- y, which operates the rs, decided in June to rmarked for building o remove the asbestos. ll take two years. lings containing asbes- olished or renovated, can be spewed over d endanger anyone who around.

maritan Medical Cen- ripped open the rear of g in July to remove two stacked asbestos-clad with other demolition

few yards from the nts were being wheeled a hallway. The door to long the hallway was iratory Therapy." federal regulations are protect the public and asbestos emissions dur-

Apparent U.S. consumption of asbestos fibers (thousands of tons)*



ing demolition and remodeling projects. The regulations are thorough and strict. But enforcement, at least in Arizona, is sporadic and lax.

The EPA, for example, requires a contractor to notify local health authorities in writing before tearing asbestos out of a building.

But Robert Evans, air-quality manager for the Maricopa County Department of Health Services, has no record of any such notification for Good Samaritan.

Terry Melot, head of Arizona Boiler Inc. of Phoenix, which removed the boilers and water pipes at Good Samaritan, said all required safety precautions were taken during the work. He said he asked county air-pollution-control officials by telephone if they wanted written notification before the demolition started and was told that wouldn't be necessary.

Evans said it's "possible" that Melot was advised incorrectly about what the law requires. But Evans isn't particularly concerned about it.

Asbestos emissions during demolition, he said, pose no "major health hazard." He said the EPA placed controls on demolition merely as a "precautionary" measure.

The EPA disagrees.

"The regulations are there for a purpose; they are there to protect the public," said John A. Todhunter, assistant EPA administrator.

Although inhaling asbestos has been proven to cause cancer, the effects of ingesting it are unknown.

Asbestos is in drinking water.

Nationwide, about 200,000 miles of asbestos-cement pipes are used to deliver tap water to consumers. Nearly three-fourths of Phoenix's water-pipe system is made of asbestos cement. The pipe is common in cities throughout the West because it

is cheaper than cast-iron pipe from East Coast foundries.

Water can erode the inside of the pipe and release asbestos fibers. The fibers also can be loosened by workmen installing or maintaining pipes.

Philip Slagel, assistant director of water operations for Phoenix, said asbestos has been found in the city's water but that there is no evidence that it is harmful.

Researchers, however, are concerned about possible health risks of ingesting asbestos. They note that asbestos-cement pipe has been used in the United States for only about 40 years, which is not long enough for the death patterns to emerge that would show whether it causes cancer.

In the meantime, many companies have decided not to take a chance on whether ingestion of asbestos causes disease.

Asbestos once was a popular filtering material for beer, wine and fruit juices, but its use has been phased out by several companies in favor of other materials.

It may well be impossible to escape from asbestos. It's in submarines beneath the sea and in missiles in outer space. It's in the skyscrapers of New York City and in the remote reaches of California's Sierras. It has been mined in Grand Canyon National Park.

Gov. Bruce Babbitt, a geologist, recalls exploring those mine shafts and picking up hunks of the mineral.

"I have subsequently learned that you don't go wandering through those tunnels breaking off pieces of asbestos without wearing a mask," he said last month.

Next: Workers — "time bombs."