CONFERENCE REPORT

At: Product Development Conference Room

Date: 3/11/77

By: WBH/bc

Organization

Street

City

Personnel	Title
Dr. John Kilsheimer	
Fred Ferguson	
Les Sackett	
Al Davidson	
Dick Gruenbaum	
Ron Wietelmann	
Gary Higinbotham	
Tom Trout	
Bill Hillegass	

SUBJECT: VERMICULITE ASBESTOS

This meeting was scheduled to review the vermiculite asbestos situation and discuss the alternate plans of action to cover Scotts future use of vermiculite.

A. Regulations

The development of the regulations through the past few years has gone from the standard of greater than 5 fibers of a 5 micron size and was dropped to 2 fibers/cc of air in July, 1976. Last summer OSHA proposed ½ fiber/cc. The latest indication from NIOSHA proposed 0.1 fiber/cc. The present condition in the standard area of the Trionized Plant is 0.8 fibers/cc.

In general, the 0.5 fibers/cc level may be attainable in the Trionized Process area, but it is less probable to be achieved in the expander area.

In the Trionized area the following could be made to improve the overall situation in the Trionized Plant:

Closing the feeder system for vermiculite in the basement with screw fedders.

Improving the vacuum system on the stoners at the base of the expander units.

An improved vermiculite conveyer from the expander area to the pesticide area.

American Vermiculite has indicated to us that their vermiculite does not contain asbestos. Analysis made of samples obtained of African ore from our plants indicated there was vermiculite contamination by asbestos. These samples were taken from our plant and the material could have been contaminated in the

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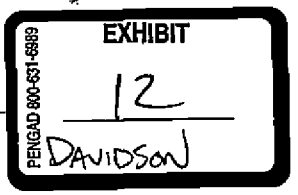

sampling process. Dick Gruenbaum will obtain samples from African ore in storage in Portsmouth where no contamination of the ore is possible. This will be studied by independent labs hired by O. M. Scott & Sons.

Question was raised, if we feel the operators in the expander area should wear respirators at this time. Since we are presently meeting all of the standards of OSHA, it was not felt it was warranted. It was felt that an independent expert should be consulted to establish the views of experts at this time of what the standards should be for operator and associate health regardless of what the rules and regulations are by OSHA or NIOSHA recommendations. This will be looked in to by Bill Hillegass and Dick Gruenbaum.

The 0.1 fiber/cc level was considered impossible to obtain in our plant and the expander area. Because of this, it was determined that outside companies should be contacted who have similar problems to see what they feel are the standards and the feasibility of reaching these standards.

B. Raw Materials

The other contributing factor to the conditions experienced in the Trionized Plant is raw materials. It was questioned whether moving to a new size of vermiculite would increase or decrease the potential of asbestos contamination. Indications from initial testing indicate that the next larger size contains less asbestos. This contradicts what the assumption was in going to a larger vermiculite particle. A request has been made to check the data to back up these initial tests and the suspensions of the larger vermiculite, both from Zonolite and the African ore. Samples will be obtained from both areas of the next larger size and analytical tests done by independent labs. Al Davidson was assigned this task.

The feasibility of storing enough back-up vermiculite from Africa to warrant 100% use of this ore was stated to be approximately 3 months. It is feasible to store this amount of ore and to obtain it from South Africa.

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Another source of ore is a new deposit found in Virginia. It is not known whether this particular ore contains asbestos as a contaminate or not. A sample of this material will be analyzed to see what are its ingredients and contaminates.

Other sources of basic material for a carrier for Scott products will continually be investigated. Products such as Perlite and other types of carriers will be researched.

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