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OWENS-CORNING FIBERGLAS CORPORATION

P. O. BOX 100, BERLIN, NEW JERSEY 08009. PHONE: (609) 767-3300

January 15, 1979

Dear Former Owens-Corning Berlin Plant Employee:

Over the past several months, the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare has made a number of public statements regarding the possible health effects of exposure to asbestos. Recently, they announced a program to contact persons who have worked in the past with asbestos, and to notify those persons and all physicians in the United States of the health hazards of working with asbestos.

Even though asbestos should be considered a material which can cause disease, this does not mean that everyone who has been exposed to asbestos will be adversely affected. Adverse effects from exposure to asbestos depend on the ability to get the fibers into the body in sufficient concentrations for a long enough period of time to cause detrimental changes. If the concentrations of asbestos are kept low enough, it is unlikely to cause disease even though some fibers may be inhaled.

It usually takes many years, often times twenty or more years of exposure to excessive concentrations of asbestos before any lung changes can be detected. This does not mean that a man who works less than twenty years could not contract lung disease.

Two men working in the same moderately excessive concentration for the same length of time, might both contract the disease. One man may contract the disease or neither man may contract the disease--this is what is meant by susceptibility. From a medical standpoint, we cannot identify a susceptible individual before he has an exposure nor can we fully explain why one individual will get a more severe case than another worker.

Asbestosis, a condition of scarring of the lungs, is one disease that can result from exposure to asbestos. Asbestos exposure can also cause a person to have a greater chance of getting lung cancer, possibly intestinal cancer, or a rare type of cancer called mesothelioma. Except for mesothelioma, the chances that



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a person will get disease from working with asbestos are related to the amount of asbestos he breathed while he worked and the length of time that he worked with asbestos.

Since 1958, Berlin Plant employees have received a periodic chest X-ray as part of the preventative health program. In 1971, the company installed an even more comprehensive periodic health screening program which included, in addition to the X-ray, other testing procedures and an examination by the plant physician. This examining of current employees continues even though the company stopped using asbestos at the Berlin Plant in 1972.

A physical examination to detect the above illnesses may help to find the disease in its early stages, so that the best available treatment or medical care may be given.

Since you worked with asbestos in the past, we recommend that, as a part of your ongoing health care, you contact your personal physician for a physical examination. If you or your physician have any questions regarding asbestos or its health effects, please contact Dr. P. V. Parilla (609-767-3300) at the Owens-Corning Berlin Plant.

Sincerely,



R. S. Hite
PLANT MANAGER

RSH/jmw

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