SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Asbestos is the common name for a group of fibrous silicates including chrysotile, amosite, anthophyllite, crocidolite, and tremolite-actinolite. Asbestos is used in many industrial and consumer products to provide strength, heat resistance, corrosion resistance, rot resistance, and fireproofing. The United States currently uses approximately 7 pounds of asbestos per person in products each year. An approximate breakdown for the major product categories is:

• Asbestos paper (including commercial roofing)	38 percent*
• Asbestos cement pipe	16 percent
• Floor tile	13 percent
• Friction products	7 percent
• Sealants	7 percent
• Asbestos cement sheet	6 percent
• Gaskets and packing	3 percent
• Plastics, textile, and miscellaneous	10 percent

This document summarizes the present information on the special qualities of asbestos-containing products, the available substitute materials, and cost comparisions between asbestos and the substitute materials.

*Percent of annual United States asbestos consumption. Clifton, R.A. Mineral Industry Survey, Asbestos Industry 1978. U.S. Bureau of Mines, August 22, 1979.

PRODUCED BY FORD