

This standard was adopted as a temporary measure in 1972 by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) of the U.S. Department of Labor, and is the present accepted level. However, on July 1, 1976 a new standard is scheduled to go into effect that will reduce the TLV to only two asbestos fibers, five microns or longer, per cubic centimeter on a time-weighted average.

Protecting the Worker

While there are many differences of opinion within the medical profession concerning the problem of asbestos and health, it is universally accepted that levels of asbestos dust in the workplace must be kept to a minimum.

Industry has attacked the problem in a number of ways. Typical methods implemented to control dust levels include sophisticated dust collection systems (which combine high-power exhaust fans, duct networks and high-efficiency filters); special methods of waste disposal; use of protective clothing and portable dust respirators; and innovative wetting and dampening methods which minimize dust generated during production.

The asbestos industry has developed a completely automatic fiber bag opening station that will permit workers to open the bags, remove the fiber, dispose of the bags and introduce fiber into the manufacturing process without creating dust. In general, greater use of automation is being sought throughout the asbestos industry to reduce dust levels and to minimize exposure of employees to airborne asbestos fiber.

Basically, the requirements of an effective dust control program are twofold: (1) Design fabrication processes and production equipment so as to minimize dust generation as much as possible; and (2) Implement highly organized programs of industrial maintenance (including hygiene surveys) to insure that safe levels are maintained. Periodic monitoring of dust concentrations should reveal dust levels which exceed the threshold limit value (TLV).

It is obvious
hand in hand w
standards recentl

OSHA Regulation

On June 7,
Administration
Occupational Safe
regulating asbes
standards deal wit
fibers, (2) methc
labeling of potent
dust levels, (5) m
recordkeeping by
purpose — to prot
hazardous amounts

The major obli;
general, by the new

A. The employ
making sure that n
airborne asbestos fil

B. Where the e;
shall be notified in v
shall be informed of
reduce his exposure t

C. Engineering
work practices are
rection.

D. While correc
employee shall be
wearing of an approv
by shift rotation.

E. The use of r
control is not permitt
install engineering co
or (2) in situations w
technically feasible, or