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Survey

TO E. J. Koth - Bayonne C. O.
SUBJECT: Hooksett Plant
Asbestos Dust Survey

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(LOCATION) Bayonne C. O.
DATE January 20, 1969

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The Liberty Mutual Insurance Company made a survey on asbestos dust at the Hooksett Plant on December 10, 1968. This writer visited Hooksett on January 7-8, 1969 to help improve the dust handling system.

There are two dust systems at the plant. One system covers 20 braiders and six saturating units and the other system covers 10 carding machines. The two dust systems are identical, each consisting of hoods at the equipment exhausted by a fan into a cyclone and then into a baghouse. Each system is properly engineered and with slight modifications in the hoods and in operating practices, they should perform in a satisfactory manner.

Hoods

The hoods on the carding machines and saturating machines are adequate. The hoods on the braiders are located at the back of the braider deck and cover approximately one-third of the work area. In addition, these braider hoods have an open top. This relatively small hood on the braiders causes the air being exhausted to have a very low velocity across the front of the braider and results in poor efficiency.

It is recommended that the sides of the hood be extended to cover at least half of the braider deck. In addition, a conical shaped top, covering one-third of the back of the hood, should be installed. The materials for the hood additions should be light gauge sheet metal. It is estimated that the cost will be approximately \$40.00 for each braider. These items were thoroughly discussed with Mr. Regan during our plant visit.

Cyclones

Each of the two systems has a cyclone separator located down stream from the exhaust fan. The purpose of the cyclones is to drop out the large particles of asbestos fibers. At the time of our visit, the cyclones had not been emptied for quite some time. The accumulation of asbestos had been built up above the hopper and into the cyclone, rendering the cyclone ineffective.

It is recommended that the cyclones be emptied once a week.

Bag House

The baghouse is divided into two sections, one for each air handling system. There are no shakers on the bags. At the time of our visit the baghouse had not been emptied for some time. The practice was to shake the bags only when the baghouse is being emptied.

Because the cyclones were ineffective from being overfull, the large particles being exhausted carried over to the baghouse and loaded up the bags. This resulted in the entire air handling system becoming ineffective and relatively little air was being exhausted at the machine hoods.

It is recommended that the bags should be shaken manually each day. This procedure should take 5-10 minutes in total. In addition, a manometer should be installed on one of the hoods in each system. This would show the draft and the condition of the baghouse and would indicate if more frequent bag shaking is required.

Dust Masks

The personnel who enter the baghouse to shake the bags daily should be provided with and required to wear U. S. Bureau of Mines approved dust masks. In addition, these people should be instructed in personal hygiene on cleaning their clothes and hair after shaking bags and on the proper storage and cleaning of the masks.

Building Heat

Because of the large volumes of air handled by the dust system, the building heat is continuously being withdrawn and exhausted outside in the baghouse. As a matter of worker comfort and of fuel conservation, any machine that is not in operation should have the hood capped off. This is probably most easily done by inserting a plug into the hood exhaust pipe. The plug should have a handle with a red flag attached to insure the removal of the plug before starting up the machine. It is not recommended that dampers be installed in lieu of plugs as the dampers will collect stringers of asbestos and eventually build up enough to cause a blockage.

After these changes in the braider hoods are completed and the operating practices on the cyclones and baghouse are brought into line, the insurance company should be requested to return and sample the air for asbestos contamination.

We would appreciate a follow-up report from Hooksett on the asbestos dust problem when it is felt that the problem has been solved.

(A.E.D.) Bute

