PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

MAR-18

May 4, 1976

Mr. J. H. Ratogowski, Buyer
Auto Accessories, Department 638
Sears, Roebuck and Company
Sears Tower
Chicago, Illinois 60684

Dear Joe:

In reply to your inquiry, most friction material producers are working on low asbestos or non-asbestos friction materials.

There are two main current competitors to asbestos usage. They are fiberglass and semi-metallics. Both materials represent major product cost penalties. The usual grades of asbestos used in disc pads and brake linings cost from $0.03 to $0.18 per pound. Chopped strand fiberglass starts at about $0.40 per pound. Specific knowledge of the cost of semi-metallic materials is not known except for general references as to being "substantially more".

Besides their cost penalty, these materials also present performance compromises like noise, increased wear, increased wear on mating surfaces, poor "cold" performance, incompatibility with existing rotor and disc materials, etc.

The majority of this work is, in my opinion, being carried on by the OEM vehicle manufacturers because of their control over the mating disc and brake drum materials and other components of the brake system should attendant systems changes be required for proper function of a non-asbestos friction material.

Yes, Raymond is working on low asbestos and non-asbestos material concepts. Our effort has been with the fiberglass or fiberglass-like materials. Work in this area is and will be, for the near term, a low key type effort since we do not anticipate any near term radical change in friction material compositions.

Sincerely,

L. L. Scaly
Vice President

LLS:ec

cc: W. N. Bockay
B. O. Pond
R. C. Rogers
F. C. Shelton
F. V. Stroh
R. A. Ward

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