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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Occupational Safety and Health Administration
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210

September 1, 1972

Mr. V. J. Meyers, Manager
Environmental Health and Safety
Administration
Western Electric
222 Broadway
New York, New York 10038

Dear Mr. Meyers:

This is in reply to your letter of July 13, 1972 to Mr. Chain Robbins, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Medical examinations are required for all employees engaged in occupations regularly exposed to airborne concentrations of asbestos dust. This would not apply to employees who are engaged in other occupations, even though they may occasionally, and momentarily, enter an area where there are operations involving the use of asbestos.

We do not at this time know specifically which levels of asbestos fibers above zero exposure will not produce mesothelioma, lung cancer and abdominal neoplasms. The medical examinations are appropriate in order to determine most effectively whether the health of employees is adversely affected by this exposure.

This approach may not necessarily be followed for other chemicals or physical agents where dose-response relationships are better defined. Standards may be established where medical examinations may not be required below specified exposure levels exceeding zero exposure.

Sincerely,

GERARD F. SCANNELL
Director
Office of Standards

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