

FILE NAME: Railroads (RR)

DATE: 1981

DOC#: RR049

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letters RE Asbestos Rope Work

February 6, 1981

File: 1103

2 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
202 237 2400



Mr. N. J. Andrews
Director of Safety
233 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Nick:

This has reference to your letter of January 28, 1981 written to Steering Committee members concerning the use of asbestos rope to heat rail when making joints.

Since early 1978, we have used coarse sawdust, building insulation in bags (rock wool) and/or rolls of insulation (fiberglass) which we saturate with fuel oil and place along rail. These materials are used in place of asbestos to eliminate the problems associated with handling, burning, or breathing asbestos.

Sincerely,

A. R. Fritts, Jr.
Director Personal Injury Prevention

cc: Messrs. C. W. Bailey	F. M. Kaylor
G. W. Gearhart	C. R. MacDonald
W. T. Mathers	O. J. Pilcher
G. P. Burns	C. S. Baldwin
W. F. Wingate	G. P. Barry
P. L. Disinger	R. C. Lindquist
G. S. Pollard	M. C. Mitchell
R. D. Shaver	J. H. Sadler

cc: Mr. A. B. Cary

February 10, 1981



Mr. H. J. Andrews, Director of Safety
Illinois Central Gulf Railroad
233 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Hick:

This has reference to your letter of January 28, 1981 concerning ICG's practice of using asbestos rope as a wick to heat rail when making joints.

In checking with our Engineering Department, they gave me three photographs of a system we are presently using which consists of 6 lengths of pipe, 8' long with a quick disconnect coupler used in the center of every two lengths of pipe. For heating a rail, we place 3 of these heaters each 16' in length along the side of the rail.

In photograph 3 you will see the pressure regulator and the hoses. The hoses will reach from the center 16' piece out to each section 16' away. We use approximately 20 pounds of LP gas pressure with the pressure adjustment being done at the regulator on the gas tank.

The 8' units fit in the back of a pickup truck and can be easily handled to any location where we have a pull-apart.

The only problem we have found with this system, to date, is that we lose pressure in the LP tanks when we have extremely cold weather; sometimes it is necessary to place the tanks in a warm environment to generate gas.

Sincerely,

C. W. Bailey
Director of Safety

JLR/jc
Attachment
cc: AAR Steering Committee

516 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Phone 312 648-3000



February 12th, 1981

Mr. N. J. Andrews
General Manager
Safety/Technical Training
Illinois Central Gulf RR.
Two Illinois Center
233 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Mr. Andrews:

Reference is made to your letter of January 28, 1981 concerning asbestos rope and its use as a wick to heat rail when making joints.

We are now testing a fiber glass filament rope. Once the results of the test are final will share same with you.

Very truly yours,

G. J. Barry
Dir. Rules & Safety

cc - AAR Steering Committee

February 17, 1981

Mr. N. J. Andrews
General Manager-Safety/Technical Training
Illinois Central Gulf Railroad
Two Illinois Center
233 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Nick:

This is in reference to your letter of January 28, 1981, concerning methods used to bring rail ends together.

In normal maintenance and production procedures we use either the Simplex ratchet (mechanical) rail puller/expander or the Simplex 120-ton hydraulic rail puller/expander. However, during winter months when faced with pull-aparts, we do utilize asbestos rope.

The asbestos rope used by Conrail is not a pure material but a compound of interwoven fibers. It is loosely wrapped in wire to aid in holding the rope together and prevent damage, and, in turn, is kept in a sealed metal container. The rope is soaked in fuel oil in this container and neither the soaking nor ignition break down the rope or its constituents and asbestos fibers are not released.

Our procedures require that the rope be carried to the site in the container. The rope is then removed from the fuel oil using a tool or by hand, suitably protected with gauntlet style gloves. Once in place, the employees ignite the rope from the upwind side using either a fusee or gasoline distributing can.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Southern Pacific Building • One Market Plaza • San Francisco, California 94105 • (415) 362-1212

O. J. PILCHER
MANAGER - EMPLOYE SAFETY
W. F. CHURCH
ASST. ASSISTANT MANAGER -
EMPLOYE SAFETY

018-4-3

February 18, 1981

J. P. HADDEN
ASSISTANT MANAGER -
EMPLOYE SAFETY
111 CHANALIN AVENUE
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77002



Mr. N. J. Andrews
General Manager - Safety/Technical Training
Illinois Central Gulf Railroad
Two Illinois Center
233 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Nick:

This has reference to your letter of January 28 to the Association of American Railroad's Steering Committee Members concerning use of asbestos rope to heat rail while making joints.

We have checked with our Engineering Department and find that we do not use asbestos for wicking material to heat the rail. We use cotton rope saturated with fuel oil; which is ignited to supply sufficient heat to expand the rail in making the prescribed joints.

Yours truly,

cc - AAR Steering
Committee Members

O. J. Pilcher

CP Rail

February 24, 1981

Our File GC-798.15.C
Your File



Mr. N. J. Andrews
Director of Safety
Illinois Central Gulf Railroad
233 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Nick,

This refers to your letter dated January 28, 1981, requesting procedures followed relative to making rail joints on break-aparts.

CP Rail uses asbestos rope soaked in kerosene when the space is less than three inches.

A rail puller with 120-ton capacity is used in conjunction with the asbestos rope, where required.

Yours truly,

Superintendent,
Accident Prevention

cc: A.A.R. Safety Section
Steering Committee

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT

RR-157

Jacksonville, Florida February 25, 1981

8-1

Mr. R. E. Frame
Chief Engineering Officer

The officers of the AAR Safety Steering Committee recently exchanged information on methods used to heat rail while making joints, especially the use of asbestos rope for this purpose.

For your information and review, attached is our file of letters received. Please return this information and we will retain it should it be needed again.

W. F. Wingate, Director
Accident Reporting & Analysis

WFW/cmg

attachment

BURLINGTON NORTHERN

SPRINGFIELD REGION

No.

March 11, 1961



Mr. W. J. Andrews
General Manager-Safety/Technical Training
Illinois Central Gulf Railroad
Two Illinois Center
233 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Mr. Andrews:

Reference your letter of January 16, 1961 concerning injuries sustained by employees due to explosion or fire during welding or cutting operations on locomotive fuel tanks.

We have had no incidents regarding this type operation in 1960 or any other year.

Reference your letter of January 26, 1961 concerning the use of asbestos rope as a wick to heat rail when making joints.

On the Springfield Region, we use a machine called an 'expander'. It uses a 3½ HP engine to drive a hydraulic pump. The pressure pulls the rails together so that a stripped joint can be repaired.

The use of rope and oil to heat the rail has been discontinued.

Sincerely,

G. S. Follard
G. S. Follard
Director Safety and Rules

cc: AAR STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jacksonville, Florida March 23, 1981
8-1

Mr. R. E. Frame
Chief Engineering Officer

This refers to my letter of February 25, 1981 relative to AAR Steering Committee information on methods used to heat rail while making joints.

Attached are two additional letters. Please return this information and we will retain it should it be needed again.

W. F. Wingate

W. F. Wingate, Director
Accident Reporting & Analysis

attachments

✓