

FILE NAME: Owens-Corning (OC)

DATE: 1955 Dec 6

DOC#: OC148

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Memo RE New Health Hazard Research;
Fine Fibered Fiberglass Products

INTRA-COMPANY CORRESPONDENCE

General Offices—Toledo, Ohio December 6, 1955

Attention of Mr. Harold Boeschenstein

cc: Mr. J. M. Briley - Toledo

From Mr. T. S. Rogers

Mr. M. D. Burch - Toledo

Subject New Health Hazard Research

Mr. L. R. Kessler - Santa Clara

Mr. J. H. Thomas - New York

Fine-Fibered Fiberglass Products

For the first time, medical literature now carries two articles which indicate that glass fibers can be harmful to human lungs. These articles can be cited effectively in damage suits against us. They undermine our otherwise excellent health story. The articles cannot be refuted, but it is possible that a defense against them can be developed.

The articles appeared in the September 1955 issue of the A. M. A. ARCHIVES OF INDUSTRIAL HEALTH. The author is Dr. G. W. H. Schepers, director of Saranac Laboratories, who has reported experiments by Dr. Leroy U. Gardner prior to his death. Three types of fibers were tested: one of textile type (which proved inert) and two of Aerocor type. Photostats are attached in which detrimental statements are underlined in red (Exhibits A & B).

Because of the exceedingly technical nature of the articles we obtained interpretations from Dr. C. S. Bishop, Dr. Glenn H. Reams and Dr. Harry Rinehart. A condensed summary of their findings is attached. (Exhibit C) In effect they tell us the articles are "loaded with statements that could be damaging in a suit" against Owens-Corning.

A defense against these articles can probably be set up by further research. Fibers in the Aerocor size range and long-time exposures to high dust concentrations are involved. Dr. Schepers verbally told us his findings indicate that 25 to 30 years of exposure might be needed to develop the harmful lung effects he reports. Unfortunately he failed to state this in his articles.

Our approach would start with measuring the size as well as the quantity of glass particles actually present in the air near various manufacturing and fabricating processes. Animal studies properly related to these dusts and dust concentrations would be instituted and correlated with Dr. Gardner's early work and Dr. Schepers recent reports. This investigation would disclose (1) the degree of hazard in fine fibers, if any, (2) limits of permissible dustiness or fly, and (3) methods of eliminating any hazard actually found.

In case you decide that such defensive action is desirable, I have budgeted \$15,000 (at \$5,000 per quarter) for a two-year research study beginning in the second quarter of 1956.

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6 Months

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WHY FILE THIS?