Monsanto

Battley / Bettys / Gray / Harris / Kendall / Pontelly

FROM (NAME—LOCATION—PHONE) J. C. Edwards - Chocolate Bayou Plant - Ext. 5847

DATE May 15, 1980

cc. G. E. Davenport

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

MON-1848

SUBJECT Asbestos/OSHA

Burns

REFERENCE

TO : W. H. Collier
J. W. Frizzell
J. S. Hagood
F. C. Himes
A. E. Hutton
J. W. Kongable
J. E. McDannold
S. G. Pappas
L. C. Peeler
F. L. Thompson
W. W. Varnado

OSHA is currently indicating through various press releases that they are considering lowering the Asbestos Standard from 2 fiber/cm^3 to 0.1 fiber/cm^3. This happens to be the lowest level that can be accurately measured by the NIOSH method.

Based on past data, we are in compliance with the current standard. However, since we still have not replaced all the asbestos insulation in this plant, we are conducting an extensive survey to determine what the effect of a new standard would be.

I have also asked Mundy to monitor some of their activities as a check on compliance.

Our monitoring is area samples for background levels.

Since we still use asbestos in some areas, I am asking by a separate memo for a listing of all asbestos uses. This also includes asbestos wound gaskets.

The final outcome of a new asbestos standard may be, essentially, to abandon its use. Therefore, in anticipation of this we should start looking for substitutes.

For those of you who did not see it, I am enclosing a clipping from The Wall Street Journal. If you have any questions, please call.

Jim Edwards, /bg

J. C. Edwards

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IN - 10 (REV. 8/77)

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Lower Limit for Occupational Exposure To Asbestos Is Being Considered by U.S.

4-18-80

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

WASHINGTON—The federal government is considering a tougher standard for occupational exposure to asbestos.

"The severity of the threat posed and the very high numbers of workers exposed to the asbestos hazard dictate that we move with all deliberate speed in amending the present standard. . . . ," Eula Bingham, assistant labor secretary for occupational safety and health, told a news conference.

She was reacting to a federal study group's recommendation for a maximum workplace exposure limit of 100,000 asbestos fibers per cubic meter of air, the lowest level that can be accurately measured. The current level, set in 1972, is two million fibers per cubic meter of air.

Concluding that there isn't a safe level of exposure to asbestos, the group also urged a ban on "new nonessential uses of asbestos." The group was made up of scientists from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, or NIOSH.

Mrs. Bingham refused to say whether OSHA will endorse the study group's proposed exposure limit or a higher one. And with extensive public hearings expected, a revised standard probably won't be issued for six months, she added.

An estimated 1.4 million U.S. workers are exposed to asbestos and nearly 750,000 tons are used annually to produce such items as floor tiles, cement, acoustical products, brake linings and roof coatings. Between 58,000 and 75,000 deaths a year are due to asbestos-related diseases, primarily cancer, the officials said.

"It isn't entirely clear there are any essential uses of asbestos," NIOSH Director Anthony Robbins told the news conference. He noted that such companies as General Motors Corp. have developed asbestos substitutes; 30% of the car brakes GM makes this year won't contain asbestos, he said.

But even if asbestos is removed from manufacturing, Dr. Robbins said, it still remains a problem in the construction and demolition of buildings.

In 1975, OSHA proposed lowering the standard to 500,000 fibers per cubic meter of air, and in 1976, NIOSH recommended that OSHA lower the standard further, to 100,000 fibers. Neither proposal was ever acted on.

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