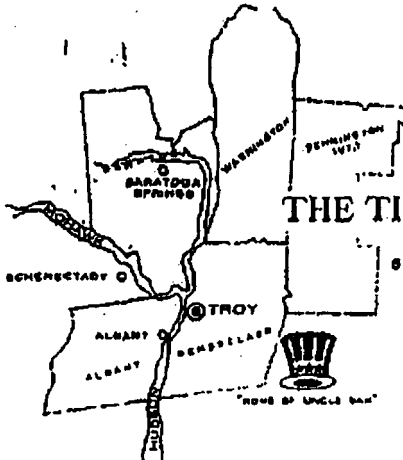


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DAVID Q. TAYLOR

David Q. Taylor  
Manager - Corporate News Relations  
The Bendix Corporation Executive Offices  
Bendix Center  
Southfield, Michigan 48076

Dear Mr. Taylor:

Enclosed is the article which resulted from my work with the mortality study. It was carried on page 12 of The Times Record on Saturday, August 18.

Thank you for your cooperation during the investigation.

Sincerely,

*Anne M. Hess*  
Anne M. Hess



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# 1977 asbestos study results at Bendix plant challenged

By ANNE HESS  
Staff Writer

A NATIONALLY-KNOWN expert on asbestos exposure and cancer has challenged the results of a 1977 study made at the Green Island Bendix plant which showed no relationship between exposure to asbestos there and deaths from asbestos-associated diseases. In response, the doctor who conducted the study said that the results were "not definitive."

After reading the study, which was commissioned by Bendix, Dr. Irving Selikoff of the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York said, "There aren't sufficient overall findings that would merit the conclusions (reached by the researchers) or conclusions of any type, one way or the other."

The study, which was carried out by Dr. William Gaffey of the Stanford Research Institute of California, examined the death rates and causes of death of 1,903 present and past workers at the Green Island plant. In comparing the Bendix workers with the expected statistics for white males, the researchers found no more people dead than would be expected. However, they did find more cancers of all types and more cancers of the central nervous system than they would expect.

In an interview Friday, Gaffey, who is no longer with the Stanford Research Institute, said, "I don't think this is a definitive study. One does not look at this and say, 'Well, we're safe.' One looks and says, 'Well, we didn't find anything,' and that is a fact—we didn't."

The researchers said that the large number of total cancer cases "is the result of excess mortality from cancers of specific sites and in any case was greatest in those with the shortest periods of employment." Cancers developing in men with short periods of employment at Bendix are "not consistent with an occupational association," the study says.

The specific cancers which killed more people were brain cancer, which was the cause of death of five Bendix employees, and malignant melanoma, a skin cancer, which killed two employees. The development of the cancer in men who had worked the longest at Bendix and the latency period of the cancer were "consistent with an occupational origin," the study reported.

The study argues, however, that brain and skin cancers

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have never been shown to be asbestos-caused. "There is an excess mortality which could be associated with some occupational exposure other than asbestos," the researchers concluded, "although the scientific literature suggests no obvious mechanism."

Selikoff, who recently completed a federally-funded study which showed lung damage in 86.2 percent of shipyard workers who were exposed to asbestos for at least 20 years, said, "Eighty-two percent (of Bendix workers studied) have been employed less than 15 years and most of our lung cancers come 30, 35, or 40 years following onset of exposure (to asbestos)." Selikoff continued, "If you were to take people who have begun smoking at age 20 and look at them at age 30, you wouldn't expect to see anything."

Gaffey said, "Enough of these people were short-termers that we would want to go back and look again in another five or 10 years."

Selikoff added, "There are statistical problems with things of this type since all deaths, even those that occurred a week, a month, a year, or five years following work exposure there are included and the inclusion of such deaths must dilute the findings. It was striking that even with such dilution potential there was even more cancer than expected."

The Bendix plant was fined \$600 by the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration for inadequate control of asbestos dust in 1975, according to OSHA records. A spokesman for OSHA said in July that although his department was concerned with the possible long-term effects of asbestos exposure, OSHA could not to investigate those effects in workers.

"There are probably a million places like Bendix," the spokesman said. "All we're trying to do is correct conditions as they exist now."

Lou Falco, business agent for Local 1508 of the United Auto Workers, the union at Bendix, said that the conclusions of Gaffey's study had been printed and distributed to workers at the plant in 1977.

"You used to be able to see the dust flying in the shafts of sunlight," Falco said. "Now they have a whole new duct system and a new pelletizing machine to take care of the asbestos."

Falco added, "Since 1974, everything's been good."