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ASBESTOS STUDYProgress Report to the API Committee on Industrial Hygiene

The Asbestos Committee has tabulated reports on the health status of 445 active or retired employees who have worked as insulators in oil refineries for ten years or more. A brief summary of their health status is:

Normal health	429
Increased lung markings	5
Fibrosis	3
Emphysema	3
Cancer - colon	1
" eyelid	1
" larynx	1
" lip	1
Myelogenous leukemia	1

In addition, reports on 34 insulators with less than ten years' service have been received. Three of these have emphysema, the other 31 are in normal health.

The Committee has also received reports of eight deaths due to cancer among insulators. Two were reported as bronchogenic cancer, two as lung cancer, one rectum, one GI tract, one bladder and one peritoneum, the latter being possibly mesothelioma.

These figures are based on information from six companies. A seventh reports no illness among insulators that could be attributed to asbestos but as yet has not reported the number of exposed employees. One company's occupational records are not adequate enough to give any precise information.

Two other companies are compiling information on their insulators and this will provide us with about 100 more reports. When these reports are received this committee will prepare a detailed report for submission to the API Industrial Hygiene Committee.

The question of asbestos as an air pollution health hazard continues to be debated. Chemical Week, in its September 10, 1966 issue, states: "Recent studies have convinced U. S. Public Health Service specialists

RECEIVED TIME OCT. 9. 11:39AM

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OCT. 9. 11:50AM

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and other medical authorities that about 40% of all Americans have mild, chronic cases of asbestosis, even though most of them never worked directly with asbestos." But Dr. Murray C. Brown, Chief of the PHS Division of Occupational Health in a letter to Chemical Week (October 8, 1966) says "we know of no scientific evidence supporting the statement that 40% of all Americans have mild chronic cases of asbestosis."

Asbestos Committee

Allan E. Dooley

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~~November 12, 1966~~

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RECEIVED TIME OCT. 9. 11:39AM

PRINT TIME OCT. 9. 11:50AM