

STATUS OF OSHA REGULATIONS ON ASBESTOS

The Asbestos Information Association has advocated the work practices approach as a means of controlling asbestos dust for the construction industry standard. The construction industry is different than the manufacturing industry because of the transient work force and other such characteristics. There is some possibility that OSHA may possibly go with a work practices oriented regulation for the construction industry standard. If a contractor was using certified work practices it might relax the need for other control procedures.

As regards the manufacturing standard, no public hearing has been held and none has been scheduled. It is possible that the construction industry standard might be part of any public hearing where OSHA is considering further action on the manufacturing standard. Mr. Fenner indicates that to his knowledge nothing has been done on the construction standard and he does not foresee any action in 1978. The proposed changes in the manufacturing standard that were made in 1975 are awaiting evaluation in a study by a group contracted for by OSHA. Consad has yet to complete a study of the economic impact of the proposals which were in the October 1975 proposals for the manufacturing segment of the industry. Further, the Research Triangle Institute was to make an economic study for the construction industry. Drafts of these studies will not be ready before April 1978. In summary, there appears to be little action that can be expected in the near future as regards either the construction standard or the manufacturing standard.

OSHA "GENERIC" STANDARD--SUBSTANCES POSING AN OCCUPATIONAL CARCINOGENIC RISK

The proposed "generic" standard for identification, classification and regulation of toxic substances posing a potential occupational carcinogenic risk was published in October 1977. These proposals are referred to as the "generic" standard. The proposal is to have a basic standard written, and then the blanks could be filled in depending upon the particular suspected carcinogen. Any comments concerning this generic standard were to be in by January 31, 1978. (Subsequently postponed to February 28, 1978.) This proposed "generic" standard is a major step by OSHA and apparently is the thinking of the new Assistant Secretary of Labor, Eula Bingham. The main target of this generic standard would be the chemical industry. Industry has set up a group to present their viewpoints as regards this generic standard. Several manufacturers formed the American Industrial Health Council (AIHC). As asbestos will still be regulated under the earlier asbestos regulations there is no action that the Institute could take at this time. It is, of course, a standard which could have a most substantial impact on all industry.

UAW PETITION FOR EMERGENCY ASBESTOS STANDARD

In July 1977 Mr. Douglas Fraser, President of United Automobile Workers petitioned the Honorable Ray Marshall, Secretary of Labor, to establish an emergency standard for exposure to asbestos, in line with the proposed changes OSHA made on September 30, 1975. There was a question as to the status of this petition. The UAW's petition for an emergency standard was denied by the Department of Labor. The Department of Labor politely denied the petition because there was an existing standard in effect, and the issues raised by the proposed revisions to the standard had not been resolved.