

Interoffice Memorandum

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TO (Name and Location)	DATE
Mr. M. R. Stenzel - Dallas	July 14, 1980
FROM (Name and Location)	REFERENCE NO.
Mr. E. S. Ramey - TC	ESR-396-80

((ANALYTICAL METHOD FOR ASBESTOS FOR FIELD USE))

Attached is an analytical method for screening unidentified insulation or other building materials for the presence of Asbestos (a small pea size sample must be pulverized). The method is suitable for use in the field and is simple and inexpensive.

Presence of Iron (Fe^{+2}) and/or magnesium (Mg^{+2}) develops identifiable colors for a positive test. The absence of Fe and Mg in a test sample indicates the absence of asbestos. False positive results can be obtained due to other Fe^{+2} and Mg^{+2} containing material which is not asbestos since this simple test is not specific for asbestos.

The method, recently developed by NIOSH, is Colorimetric. It was described in the June 1980 issue of National Safety News, page 20, as "an inexpensive and simple method for quickly determining whether asbestos is present in building materials."

Kits using the above analytical scheme are now marketed by Sipin and SKC with availability unknown. Home made kits are easily made for much less than the asking price of Sipin and SKC.

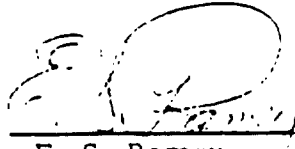
Mr. Cody Milburn of Suntime Refinery (Corpus Christi) demonstrated his home made kit (cost about \$50.00 including fishing tackle box) at an informal meeting of local Safety and Health people which was sponsored by the local Vallen people. Mr. Cody has his laboratory technician using this test method in the field with an estimated analysis time of 30 minutes or less.

I obtained a copy of the method from Mr. Cody. Included in the method is a list of reagents required.

If our people use this method, they should be properly informed of the hazardous chemicals present and the safe handling of the more dangerous reagents such as 50% Hydrofluoric Acid, 10N Sodium Hydroxide, and concentrated Phosphoric and Sulfuric Acids.

If I can be of further help, let me know.

UNITERMS
ANALYTICAL
METHOD
ASBESTOS


E. S. Ramey

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