



NORTH AMERICAN ASBESTOS CORPORATION

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November 7, 1966

Mr. Robert Buckley, Vice President-Sales
Pittsburgh Corning Corporation
One Gateway Center
Pittsburgh 2, Pennsylvania

Office of the President

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Dear Bob,

We have been corresponding from time-to-time, and occasionally discussing the rather wide-spread publicity that has appeared dealing with the possible hazards to health resulting from handling asbestos and asbestos products. I am sure you are still accumulating information on this subject.

You may have seen a very unfortunate article entitled "Asbestos; Awaiting Trial" that appeared in the September 10 issue of 'Chemical Week'. (a copy is enclosed). Because this article, appearing in an important technical journal, is so inaccurate, irresponsible and apparently inspired, the Asbestos Textile Institute, of which we are members, made an investigation with McGraw-Hill -- who have since expressed regret at the article's publication, explaining that the article was produced by an inexperienced reporter who apparently explored one side of the problem. (with Drs. Sellikoff and Churg). McGraw-Hill have indicated embarrassment that the article was not properly checked by senior editorial members, but, in any case, they have published two letters in rebuttal. I enclose these letters by Mr. Roger Hackney of Johns Manville, and Dr. M. C. Brown of the Public Health Service, which were published in the October 8 issue of 'Chemical Week'.

The original article is so damaging that the letters in rebuttal are not likely to help very much except that I think Mr. Hackney's letter is a very reasoned and thoughtful statement on the subject. Several companies in the asbestos textile industry are supplying copies, of the page in 'Chemical Week' showing these letters, to their sales personnel who have encountered problems on this subject.

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PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT
U-220

Mr. Robert E. Buckley

November 7, 1966

- Page 2 -

If you have not already seen these items you may find them of some interest.

Also, for whatever it is worth to you, I enclose copy of a letter issued by Jim Galloway, who is the Sales Director of Cape Insulation Limited/London (manufacturers of Caposite Insulation). This letter, as you will note, has been issued to the principal sales personnel of Cape Insulation.

With very best regards.

Sincerely yours,

NORTH AMERICAN ASBESTOS CORPORATION

President

RECryer/jc

encl.

cc: Mr. Russell Brittingham

Mr. Byrl Stout

Making Giant Steps

Two chemical process companies took giant steps toward diversifying into the oceanography field last week. And two paper companies with combined sales of nearly \$1 billion/year reached a tentative agreement to merge.

(1) Bendix Corp. (Detroit) expanded its oceanic activities by acquiring for an undisclosed amount of stock Marine Advisers (La Jolla, Calif.), producer of oceanographic instruments for petroleum and utility companies, state and federal agencies, and firms engaged in scientific projects.

(2) Fluor Corp. (Los Angeles) and B. L. McFarland and Associates (Fort Worth and Midland, Tex.), a group of five companies involved in offshore and onshore drilling operations, have agreed to merge, subject to stockholders' approval. The McFarland group operates five off-shore drilling rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.

(3) A tentative agreement to merge has been reached by U.S. Plywood Corp. (New York) and Champion Papers, Inc. (Hamilton, O.). It is subject to both directors' and stockholders' approval. The corporate identities of both companies will be preserved.

Reducing Gas Rates

The Federal Power Commission has ordered El Paso Natural Gas Co. and Transwestern Pipeline Co. to reduce by \$17 million/year the price of natural gas in the southern California market.

The rate cut stems from the July decision in which FPC turned down the application of Gulf Pacific Pipeline Co. (a Tenneco subsidiary) to supply gas to the Los Angeles area (ENR, Aug. 6, p. 20). Gulf Pacific last week filed for a rehearing.

El Paso and Transwestern were told they would have to lower their rates to reflect the lower costs resulting from the expanded system. At the same time, FPC said it would conduct further proceedings to decide if customers should get additional benefits from a liberal depreciation allowance.

FPC gave the companies 45 days to show cause why the reduction should not take place.

Sources of airborne asbestos

- Asbestos-lined ducts used in centrally air-conditioned buildings.
- Asbestos ducts and insulation in home central-heating plants.
- Motor vehicle brake linings and clutch plates.
- Auto undercoatings.
- Asbestos ceiling and floor tiles.
- Asbestos shingles and sidings.
- Construction and demolition
 - Fitting, cutting, and removing asbestos-filled wallboards and floorings, piping and insulation.
- Incineration of asbestos-filled scrap.
- Improperly filtered effluent from asbestos processing plants.

Asbestos: Awaiting 'Trial'

The asbestos industry—whose end products are valued at more than \$500 million/year—may be in for a shake-up. It could come in the form of federal legislation limiting the use of asbestos, because asbestos has been accused—though not yet “convicted”—as a significant health hazard. Probable contender for asbestos markets: plastics.

Recent studies have convinced U.S. Public Health Service specialists 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.

Unlike other airborne dust particles, asbestos fibers have the ability—almost as much as activated carbon—to absorb polycyclic hydrocarbons and arsenicals. Furthermore, says USPHS, in the past 30 years the asbestos-related cancer rate has increased sixfold.

The inference: While the average asbestos worker is well protected, the man on the street is not. The 3- μ m asbestos fibers in his lungs can come from a variety of sources (table, above).

ANALYTICAL CHEMISTS CAN MEASURE ONE way to assess hydrocarbon content in those lung deposits.

American Cancer Society researchers feel certain there is a synergistic relationship among airborne asbestos, smoking and lung cancer. They reason that the nondegradable, hydrocarbon-soaked fibers may well be a constant source of lung irritation.

PHS officials think it may take them up to five years to establish asbestos' true role as an air pollutant. However, Congress may act before the research is finished. Says Representative Robert Watkins (R., Pa.): “We've seen enough evidence already. Asbestos will never get a clean bill of health. With just a little more data we'll move for controls and strict ones.”

Some form of asbestos control is in the offing, public health officials are certain. If only part of a larger clean-ambient-air program. However, there is the danger that Congress may enact rigorous controls on the quantity of asbestos that could be used.

In that case both Canada and U.S. asbestos products manufacturers would be hard hit. Of the five forms of asbestos mined today, chrysotile asbestos holds the predominant market position because of its insulating and processing qualities. Canada produces more than 80% of the chrysotile asbestos used in the U.S. In both countries, a number of serious dislocations would occur.

At present, there is no known material that could fill all of asbestos' niches. Even with the higher standards federal controls merely call for higher standards for binders and shielding, that would spark a rise of new products, with plastics taking the lead.

Reason, say industry spokesmen, present polymer technology could easily turn up products to replace asbestos in most end uses.

Asbestos Safety Reaffirmed

TO THE EDITOR: The article titled "Asbestos: Awaiting Trial" (CW, Sept. 10, p. 32) contains many inaccuracies, which have led to erroneous assumptions and false conclusions. Briefly, the facts are these:

(1) Asbestos is a uniquely useful product serving the needs of modern man and society, and it is not likely to be replaced by economically feasible synthetic polymers, or anything else, in the foreseeable future.

(2) No published reports, even the most speculative, support the generalized statements in your article regarding health effects of possible exposure to asbestos.

(3) There is no basis for the suggestion that Congress "may act" regarding asbestos use, for no such proposals are being considered by Congress. We are informed that the congressman quoted as predicting action disclaims any knowledge of health evidence relating to asbestos or of proposals to control its use.

(4) No evidence exists to show that asbestos poses health risks for the general public or to show that even 1% of Americans have "mild chronic asbestosis," much less the 40% figure you give in your article.

(5) Regarding your list of "sources of airborne asbestos," there are no data to support the contention in your article that the "man on the street" is exposed to asbestos from these sources, or indeed that these sources contribute asbestos to the ambient air.

(6) We know of no data to support your claim of a sixfold increase in so-called "asbestos-related cancer."

As you doubtless realize, the proper conduct of our business requires us to keep abreast of scientific developments regarding asbestos, both medical and technical. It is our opinion that synthetic polymers are not likely in the

foreseeable future to completely replace asbestos in the many applications for which it is now used. Any synthetics would have to prove superior to natural asbestos and be economically competitive.

As to health aspects, in June of this year the U.S. Surgeon General appeared before the Senate Public Works Subcommittee on Air and Water Pollution, with Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine as chairman, to discuss various problems relating to air-pollution abatement. Surgeon General William Stewart enumerated a number of substances in common use, including plastics and asbestos, about which he said: "The public health hazards that may arise from these aspects of environmental contamination have not been adequately documented. In each instance further investigation is needed to determine whether health is indeed threatened and what control measures may be necessary."

In these days when all substances in our air and water and even the food we eat are constantly under scrutiny, as to their effects on the public, the fact that asbestos is among the subjects of investigation is not surprising. In fact, we have always supported and will continue to support investigations by the U.S. Public Health Service and other research scientists.

ROGER HACKNEY
Vice-President
Johns-Manville Corp.
New York

TO THE EDITOR: in reference to your article, "Asbestos: Awaiting Trial" (Sept. 10, p. 32), we know of no scientific evidence supporting the statement that "40% of all Americans have mild, chronic cases of asbestosis."

Even in the asbestos industry, where more is known about exposure levels than among the general population, there is imprecise knowledge about the health effects of exposure to asbestos.

With the cooperation of labor and industry, the Division of Occupational Health has under way a long-range, in-depth study to answer this question, as well as to develop better criteria for the safe handling and manufacture

of asbestos. In the meantime, however, the division will continue to promote the application of known control methods so that the workplace can be kept as healthy as possible.

MURRAY C. BROWN, M.D.
Chief

Division of Occupational Health
Department of Health, Education
& Welfare
Public Health Service
Washington, D.C.

CW is pleased to set the record straight. Some of those interviewed apparently drew unwarranted conclusions from insufficient and dubious data.—Ed.

MEETINGS

Assoc. of Official Analytical Chemists, annual meeting, Twin Bridges Marriott Motor Hotel, Washington, D.C., Oct. 10-12.

Technicon International symposium on automation in analytical chemistry, Statler-Hilton Hotel, New York, Oct. 17-19.

Drug, Chemical & Allied Trades Assn., annual meeting, Hollywood Beach Hotel, Hollywood, Fla., Oct. 20-22.

Commercial Chemical Development Assn., discussion of packaging, Drake Hotel, Chicago, Oct. 26-28.

National Assn. of Purchasing Agents, Chemical Group, annual fall conference, Continental Plaza Hotel, Chicago, Oct. 27.

Society of Engineering Sciences, fourth technical meeting, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, Oct. 31-Nov. 2.

American Society for Metals, national metal congress and exposition, McCormick Place, Chicago, Oct. 31-Nov. 3.

Parental Drug Assn., annual convention, Statler-Hilton Hotel, New York, Nov. 1-4.

Fertilizer Industry round-table conference, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., Nov. 2-4.

The Society of the Plastics Industry, 11th plastics film, sheeting and coated fabrics conference, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, Nov. 9-19; conference on cellular plastics in transportation, Edgewater Beach Hotel, Chicago, Nov. 15-17.

The Franklin Institute Research Laboratories, fourth annual symposium on the organic-solid state, Philadelphia, Nov. 14.

General Atomic Division of General Dynamics Corp., and Air Force Office of Scientific Research, fundamentals of gas-surface interactions, San Diego, Calif., Dec. 14-16.

CW welcomes expressions of opinion from readers. The only requirements: that they be pertinent, as brief as possible.

Address all correspondence to: H. C. E. Johnson, Chemical Week, 330 West 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

19th August, 1965.

CONFIDENTIAL

I wrote in May setting out some points for the general guidance of managers who are faced with questions on the possible dangers to health involved in the use of asbestos based materials. Changes in the situation which have taken place since then make it necessary now to amplify my instructions.

Although Asbestosis has been recognised as an industrial hazard for many years and safety regulations have been in force since the 1930s, the latest concern seems to be caused more by the discovery of an industrial cancer called mesothelioma than by any increase in the incidence of Asbestosis. In view of this I think it is important that you should know the following facts.

1. The form of lung cancer known as mesothelioma is an extremely rare condition and careful research of records throughout the World (covering the last 40 to 50 years), stimulated by the International Union Against Cancer, has so far revealed a total of approximately 500 cases. This should be contrasted with the incidence of lung cancer in England alone, which, during one year (1955) totalled 21,000 cases.
2. The asbestos content of our Caposite and Caposil moulded insulation materials which are now our principal asbestos based products, is entirely amosite asbestos. The same careful research, to which I have referred, has so far revealed not one case of mesothelioma associated with exposure to amosite asbestos.

Although the instructions contained in my memorandum of the 23rd May, about representatives avoiding discussions on medical aspects of asbestos and health must still be observed and wherever possible questions of this kind should be referred back to Head Office, the facts stated above may be pointed out to anyone who raises the question of the danger to health involved in the use of either our Caposite or Caposil moulded products.

JLG/CAL


Sales Director

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