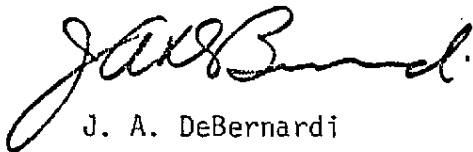


Interoffice Communication

To D. L. Norwood - Houston
From J. A. DeBernardi
Date August 8, 1977
Subject VCM Exposure - Female Blue Collar Workers

As requested in your letter of June 29, Joe Gross has been in contact with various PVC and VCM producers he has become acquainted with through his "Various Chemicals" group affiliation. I have attached a brief summary, by company, of his findings.

As you will see, the responses range from "no problem, use females in any job," to a strict policy, either written or unwritten, "not allowing females with child bearing capability to work in PVC and VCM areas." In some multiunit plants females who become pregnant are moved out of PVC/VCM areas to other units until after the birth of their child.



J. A. DeBernardi

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VCC CONTACTS - BLUE COLLAR
FEMALE WORKERS IN PVC/VCM PLANTS

Certain-Teed - Lake Charles

They employ females in PVC workforce. They have letters from their medical people that indicate there is no substantial or concrete evidence that VCM affects females any differently than males. They have a female chemist that works with VCM.

PPG - Lake Charles

They hire females in their organics and VCM workforce. They don't ask a female if she can bear children when they are considered for work. They have had females in the organics and VCM areas since 1976.

Diamond - Deer Park, Texas

Last December corporate headquarters adopted a policy based on medical information that no females with child bearing capability would be allowed to work in their PVC operation. At that time they had ten females working in the area. The corporate physician held meetings with the female employees telling them the entire plan and the reason for the decisions. They were told they would be moved to other parts of the plant with the same job status, pay, etc. In late January one or more of the female employees went to Women Equity Action League. They in turn filed an EEO charge. Diamond went to the EEO office and stated that other companies were not allowing women of child bearing ability to work in these areas and that an EEO ruling in this matter would be one that would affect the entire chemical industry. EEO said they would gather information and send it to Washington. EEO did not suggest Diamond stop the plan of moving the women. Diamond states they feel the EEOC will not react quickly to this type of charge since it does affect the chemical industry as a whole. Diamond has answered all questions and haven't heard anything since they reported in May. Diamond allowed one of the ten women to stay in the PVC area because she did not have child bearing capability.

Dow - Plaquemine, Louisiana

They allow women in all their units except the chlorinated solvent unit. They have about 50 females in the various units. If a female becomes pregnant, they will assign her to a different unit until after birth and then return her to her old unit, if a job is available. When women are hired, they are given all types of data, exposures, experimental data on rats, etc. by the medical group. In the chlorinated solvent group they allow no females at all. They are keeping the EEOC advised and have had no problems. Females have accepted this and there has been no problems related to sex discrimination.

Shell - Deer Park, Texas

They hire people into a pool and they bid out into other units. They do not have a formal company policy but females who work in the vinyl unit are moved if they should become pregnant. They go to work in some other part of the plant. They have had no EEO problems with this setup.

Tenneco - Pasadena, Texas

They have an unwritten policy not to allow females of child bearing capabilities to work in their vinyl unit. Tenneco asks the prospective employee in the pre-employment interview if she is capable of bearing children. They had one female in this area when the policy was made and moved her to another area in the plant. There was no problem from her or the EEOC. They have gone through a compliance review and had no problems. Tenneco was asked why they had no females in the vinyl area. The answer was they hire females in this area only if they cannot bear children. They have had no problems with this.