APPRAISAL OF REDUCED DUST HAZARD

Having reached a degree of dust control represented by the dust count limit of five million, it is then proper to ask: "What degree of assurance is afforded by existing knowledge that asbestosis will not, in fact, develop in the future if dustiness is kept below that level?"

If there are factors, at present unknown, that will indicate a need for still better dust control, what will that limit be?

The information available does not permit complete assurance that five million is thoroughly safe nor has information been developed permitting a better estimate of safe dustiness.

It is nevertheless of the greatest importance either that such assurances be sought or a new yardstick of accomplishment be found for accurately measuring any remaining hazard in the dust zone below five million for the elimination of future asbestosis depends upon the degree of control effected now.

Measurement of Dustiness

One basis of uncertainty as to applying present conventional dust counting techniques to the measurement of asbestos dust hazards below the five million level is summarized in the question -- are the fibers of asbestos the causative agent or the non-fibrous "cubical" particles that look like those of other industrial dusts? The non-fibrous particles in most textile operations comprise 80-95 per cent of the total dust seen in dust counting.

While it is proven that asbestos dust is the cause of asbestosis, there is no certain information as to what shape or size of dust is the causative factor. The correlation studies of the U.S.Public Health Service

MTS 007913