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JOHNS-MANVILLE CORPORATION

TWENTY-ND EAST FORTIETH STREET
NEW YORK 10, N.Y.

EXECUTIVE OFFICES

August 27, 1964

Mr. Thomas B. Bonney
Aluminum Company of America
Alcoa Building
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

I am truly sorry that I apparently added to the breeding and nurturing of the Frankenstein monster, which is the potential health hazard of our Molten Marinite product. As indicated in my letter of August 13, I am embarrassed that in a previous correspondence I said that there was an epoxy resin in this product. I have rechecked our Quality Control and Production people and, again, can state that there is no epoxy resin which might cause the problem.

As you know, our Marinite products are composed of asbestos fiber, diatomaceous earth and lime. The diatomaceous earth is in the form of a natural powder which is considered relatively innocuous when inhaled and carries an M.L.C. of 27 million particles per cubic foot. Because of the asbestos fiber content in the product we have established an M.L.C. of 5 million particles in our manufacturing and fabricating operation. In these operations where we maintain the M.L.C. below the established standard, we have experienced no problems of damage to the nasal membrane or any pulmonary fibrosis. We have had no dermatological problems, nor would I expect any because in the manufacturing process the lime should be completely reacted with the diatomaceous earth to form the calcium silicate.

As you know, many finely divided dusts including talc can cause a drying action on the skin of certain sensitive individuals. I have been told that these individuals cannot describe the feeling they experience exactly for it is not a burn, nor is it a rash, but is due primarily to a drying action on their skin. I wonder if this might be the source of your problem as far as skin is concerned.

I have asked if you should be handling this material in any manner different than you would handle asbestos alone, or should you be concerned with factors other than pneumoconiosis. Quite frankly, I do not believe that there is any other factor than a potential pneumoconiosis and I would handle the material just as if it were asbestos fiber alone. When we have followed good industrial hygiene practices, adequate local ventilation and diligent housekeeping we have experienced no problems.

ARD 042999

FOX 042879

Mr. Thomas E. Bonney

August 27, 1954

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I do hope that this information will help you to allay the fears of your people and finally lay the Frankenstein monster to rest; however, if there still are problems or worries, please do not hesitate to contact me. I might add that as you know, there is a Symposium on Leukemia at the Industrial Hygiene Foundation in Pittsburgh, on September . . . Unfortunately, I shall not be able to attend, but the Manager of our Industrial Health Program, C. L. Shacklet, probably will be there. I know that he would be very pleased to discuss this and any other problems with you if you would care to do so.

Sincerely yours,

Kenneth W. Smith, M.D.
Medical Director

ARD 043000
FOX 042880