

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

March 2, 1973

ASBESTOS -
Medical Aspects, Records, etc.

Mr. Erich H. Feilerabend
Vice President
Brakeblok - Winchester

You are well acquainted with the Federal Register and the various safety and health standards contained therein. Recently you asked for clarification regarding the medical program for employees exposed to asbestos.

On or before 1-31-73, in the States, every employer is to provide or make available a comprehensive medical examination of his employees who are exposed to airborne concentrations of asbestos fibers. These examinations are to consist first of a preplacement medical examination within 30 days following his first employment in such an occupation. This will not be any problem for us since we already do such examinations before the man is placed at work. This preplacement medical examination also includes a 14x17 posterior anterior chest x-ray, such as we are making. Suitable inquiry on the history is to be made so as to detect any symptoms of respiratory disease. The one thing which we have not been doing thus far is to include the required pulmonary function testing which, according to the law, is to consist of a forced vital capacity (FVC) and a forced expiratory volume at one second (FEV_{1.0}).

According to the law, on or before 1-31-73 and at least annually thereafter, each employer is to provide or otherwise make available a comprehensive medical examination of all his employees who in their customary occupation are exposed to airborne concentrations of asbestos fibers. This examination is to consist of at least a history paying particular attention to respiratory disease, pulmonary function testing as described above, and a posterior anterior 14x17 chest x-ray. They do not actually mention a physical examination but we are in the habit of performing these through our survey medical examinations and I feel that we should certainly continue with the actual physical examination as well.

We are interested in the employees with respect to their total medical health and not just their respiratory symptoms and possible diseases related to this system. Some of the malignancies associated with asbestos may involve other

Blackwell 4
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