

73/2351-2

To: JM
Copies: ARM/ENG/SH

Dr. S. Holmes
24th March, 1967.

CONFIDENTIALAirborne Dust Levels - Spray Fibre Division

In reply to your note, dated 22nd March, I have listed the mean fibre counts for the relevant locations in the Spray Fibre Division. There follows a short discussion of the results.

Stacking or Unstacking of bags of asbestos	46 fibres per c.c.
Alite Platform	19 " " "
Spray Fibre Drum Mixer Platforms	12 " " "
Spray Fibre Mechanical Bagging	11 " " "
General Atmosphere	5 " " "

1) Stacking and Unstacking

The sampling at points in the fibre warehouse, where bags of crude asbestos are handled, did not commence until May of last year, and since then the following counts have been obtained:-

13, 156, 34, 40, 20, 28, 62 and 17 fibres per c.c.

These relatively high results are for all three common types of asbestos used (see note 5). Only one sample has been taken whilst Crocidolite was being handled (40 f/c.c.) and on that occasion it was noted that respirators were worn by the operatives concerned.

2) Alite/Spray Fibre Platforms and Mechanical Bagging

For detailed information of the dust levels at these locations the dust survey report graphs, (which are attached) should be consulted. The trend lines indicate that there has been a steady deterioration in the conditions over the past 4 years, except at the bagging units, where several dust control measures have been introduced recently.

It will be also noticed that the results for the Membrane Filter samples (taken since January 1965) fluctuate more than those for the 'Ottway' L.R.T.P. This is due to the shorter sampling period necessary to collect a 'countable' sample on the membranes.

3) General Atmosphere

Sampling the general environment in the Spray Fibre plant commenced in January 1966. The results are indicative of the dust hazard that 'unprotected' personnel are exposed to and therefore they are rather disturbing, especially as counts as high as 9.3 and 11.4 have been obtained.

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4) Despatch

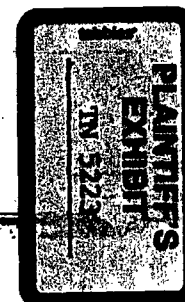
There are no figures for this stage of manufacture where the bagged Spray Fibre materials are handled. We will investigate the possibility of a dust hazard, but it is considered that the levels here are low as the paper-lined bags appear impervious to dust.

5) Comparison of Blue and White Asbestos dust counts

As you are aware, the dust levels in our factories depend upon many variables and, from the results of past T.B.A. routine surveys, there is a good indication that Crocidolite is dustier than Chrysotile when processed on textile machinery. However, in the Spray Fibre Division the level does not appear to depend upon the fibre to the same extent, but depends much more on the sampling position, the opening of the lorry doors (hence climatic conditions), and several other factors, therefore the small number of results obtained to date on the platforms, and at the bagging units, where L.S.J (Spray material containing Crocidolite) is being manufactured, are not appreciably different. As at the T.B.A. factory locations at Hindley Green, it is intended to increase the sampling rate on machines processing Crocidolite.

JH
I. Barnes
Physics Research Department.

IH/HM



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