Eaton Corporation

Inter-Office Correspondence

Date September 2, 1975
To Steve Trukalo
Division & Plant IDD/Airflex
From R. W. Rosenow
Division & Plant IDD/Airflex
Copy to See below:
Subject Asbestos Type Friction Material

EATON

I would like to call your attention to the attached article relating to a potential health hazard, when working with asbestos composition type friction material. For any machining, drilling, or grinding operations, NIOSH has issued a warning pertaining to asbestos exposure.

Emphasis is also placed on cleaning methods when working with worn friction material, and NIOSH states that compressed air should not be used for this purpose under any circumstance.

The data collected by NIOSH, thus far, is only preliminary, but assuming that the final evidence will be conclusive, it's inevitable that OSHA standards will be written and adopted to protect against this hazard. We will then want to consider some type of warning decal or tag to be affixed to clutch and brake elements furnished with the asbestos type material. This warning will also be added to our instruction manuals.

R. W. Rosenow
RWR/pl

Attachment
cc: R. R. Dirksen
R. L. Burks
R. P. Petkash
J. Kozdron
M. Collins
T. Luginbuhl

Barry Inn, Inc. et al. St. Louis City Circuit Court No. 09222-009067; 10/8/2010

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This issue is in two parts, consisting of 112 pages. This is Part 1.

President Ford Signs Postal Service Safety Bill

President Ford on August 9 signed H. R. 2559 (P. L. 94-82), bringing the quasi-public U. S. Postal Service under the coverage of OSHA's provisions on federal agency safety programs. The law brings the service under Section 19 of the Act, which requires the head of each federal agency to establish a safety and health program and to report annually to the Secretary of Labor on its program and its occupational accidents and injuries.

NIOSH Issues Warning on Brake Lining Service: Asbestos Exposure

On the basis of preliminary data showing significant asbestos exposure from brake and clutch servicing operations, NIOSH has recommended interim procedures to minimize the potential hazard affecting 907,871 factory workers, garage workers and auto mechanics. Previous studies of asbestos emissions from automobile brake lining wear showed that only a small fraction of the original asbestos content was found in brake drum dust. However, present findings indicate that enough asbestos is preserved to produce significant exposures during certain brake servicing procedures.

Servicing operations studied included blow-out of automobile drum brake assemblies, grinding of used truck brake linings, and bevelling of new truck brake linings. Average peak asbestos air concentrations for these three activities based on personal samples taken within ten feet of the operator were, respectively, 10.5, 3.75, and 37.3 fibers greater than five microns in length per ml. An analysis of samples of brake drum dust revealed that almost all of the asbestos fibers found were shorter than 0.4 microns in length.

Four Cancer Cases Discovered

The full extent of asbestos-related disease in brake servicing personnel is not presently known because this particular occupational group has not been studied systematically up to now. However, a review of the scientific literature on the association between asbestos exposure and mesothelial tumors of the pleura and peritoneum has revealed at least four cases of these rare tumors in persons who were employed in jobs involving automobile brake servicing.

Recommended Interim Procedures

While continued research is conducted, NIOSH recommends the following procedures for employee protection: If possible an area should be designated for all brake and clutch repairs and posted as presenting the hazard of asbestosis and cancer. Air purifying respirators should be worn during all brake servicing procedures, starting with the removal of the wheels and including reassembly. During manual clutch servicing, respirators should be worn during removal and cleaning of the clutch, pressure plate and housing assembly and during installation of the new clutch assembly.

Dust should first be cleaned from brake drums, brake backing plates, brake assemblies and clutch assemblies, using an industrial vacuum with a high efficiency filter system. Any remaining dust should be removed with a wet rag. Under no circumstances should compressed air or dry brushing be used for cleaning.

Respirators should be worn during arcing and riveting operations, and grinding (arcing) machines should be provided with local exhaust ventilation. Vacuum bags containing asbestos dust and cloths used for wiping the dust should be sealed in plastic bags and labeled.

Barry ... et al. St. Louis ... 10/8/2010