

Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union

9/72

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CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

Pittsburgh Corning Corp. Plant
Tyler, Texas

- 1954 -- UNARCO plant shutdown in Patterson, New Jersey, and opens in Tyler, Texas (Sellkoff study on Patterson plant found twice as much death as anticipated, and 14 times more asbestosis and 10 times more cancer than expected.)
 - 1962 -- Pittsburgh Corning buys out UNARCO Tyler plant.
 - 1963 -- First company industrial hygiene study of plant. Study calls for better house-keeping, better ventilation equipment and improved maintenance on this system.
 - 1966 -- Second company study of plant. Out of 16 air samples taken, 7 exceeded the then TLV of 5mppcf. Better ventilation is recommended.
 - 1967 -- BOSH begins nationwide study of asbestos plants.
 - Mar., 1968 -- BOSH sends data on its first survey of the Tyler plant to the company. Out of 55 samples taken, 52 exceeded the then asbestos TLV of 5mppcf.
 - Feb., 1969 -- DOL inspects plant under Walsh-Healey Act. Takes no dust samples. Report is not released to union.
 - Jan., 1970 -- BOSH returns to Tyler plant. New study shows 15 out of 17 samples to exceed the then TLV of 12 fibers. Again BOSH report only sent to the company.
 - Aug., 1971 -- Pittsburgh Corning requests variance from OSHA asbestos standard.
 - Sept., 1971 -- Dr. William Johnson, of NIOSH's Division of Field Studies and Clinical Investigations, sends copies of BOSH surveys to OCAW. First time OCAW informed of studies' existence.
 - Oct. 1971 -- NIOSH resurveys Tyler plant at OCAW request. Survey finds all operations and all areas (except the office) to have average and maximum concentrations of asbestos dust greatly exceeding the new OSHA emergency standard of 5 fiber
- NIOSH also finds that the company's respirator program, begun in August, 1971, was failing to protect the workers.

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- Oct. 1971-- NIOSH also uncovers outside environmental health hazards from burlap bags (con't.) and open dumps.
- Dec. 16, 1971-- OSHA, after an inspection, cites plant on ventilation and respirators, but not on excessive dust. These violations were considered "non-serious or regular" by OSHA. Company was fined \$210.
- Dec. 26, 1971-- Legislative Director Mazzocchi covers the entire Tyler story in his speech at meeting of AAAS in Philadelphia.
- Jan. 13, 1972-- OSHA reinspects plant. Finds items that required immediate correction were not abated. Company fined \$6990.
- Jan. 19, 1972-- NIOSH releases results of its test on burlap bags. Finds excessive asbestos dust concentrations.
- Feb. 3, 1972-- Pittsburgh Corning ends production at plant. Maintenance and shipping workers to be employed for a few more weeks. Approximately 1500 workers had been employed at the plant over the years (normal operating personnel numbered about 60; thus indicating amount of turnover after 18 years of operation.)
- Feb. 8, 1972-- OCAW President Grospiron urges EPA's Ruckelshaus to take immediate action to protect the public from environmental health hazards posed by the plant's operations. Grospiron also urges OSHA's Guenther to maintain surveillance over Pittsburgh Corning's operations and he also protested the slowness of the government's response to the situation.

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