92-00038

Manville

Internal Correspondence

To R. Batson

Date March 30, 1988

From B. Lewis Brad

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Subject Use of Amosite and Crocidolite

Recently you requested information on the use of amosite and crocidolite as opposed to chrysotile. Specifically, you wanted to know how they were used, why they were used, and Manville's share of this market.

First, I'll cover the market share. Manville used in its own manufacturing operations approximately 25% of the chrysotile, 23% of the amosite, and 62% of the crocidolite consumed in the United States. Manville also supplied to other manufacturers 26% of the chrysotile consumed in the United States, but none of the amosite or crocidolite. The percentages may seem high considering Manville owned the largest chrysotile mine in the world, but these were reasons for using the other fiber types, which I will cover next.

I'll start with crocidolite. The vast majority of all crocidolite used in the U.S., both by Manville and other manufacturers, was for making asbestos cement pipe. Since Manville was the largest manufacturer of A/C pipe, it becomes easier to understand why Manville had such a large share of the crocidolite market. Crocidolite was simply superior to all other fibers in pipe manufacture. Attempts to replace it with chrysotile resulted in a poorer quality product and increased production costs.

Other uses of crocidolite were for chemical filters, acid resistant packings, and gas filters. It was almost never used in insulation/shipyard products, and I know of only one Manville product, Thermomix 810, which would fall into this category.

Amosite, on the other hand, was used primarily in insulation products, particularly in the lightweight insulations required by the Navy. Amosite's chief advantage is that it makes a stronger, lighter, more efficient insulation than a comparable product made from crysotile. Amosite was also less expensive than comparable grades of chrysotile.

The question remains as to whether the Navy specifications were Manville's primary motivation for introducing amosite into its asbestos products. This clearly appears to be the case during the WWII era as Don has testified. The Navy's requirements for stronger, lighter, and more efficient insulations was a driving force behind Manville's experimentations to make improved products. One of the primary means for meeting these

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new requirements was the use of amosite. R. T. Land, a government consultant on miscellaneous materials, stated in 1941 about amosite that "if Canadian fibers were substituted, thicker, heavier, and less efficient products would be made, and such products would not comply with current specifications. This type of fiber is essential for bulky lightweight insulation." Considering that during this period the government was controlling the insulation market, it would have been impossible not to use amosite.

However, I will now turn Devil's Advocate and explore other reasons for using amosite that I have encountered. First and foremost would be the shortage of suitable Canadian fibers. One of Manville's own Inspection and Control reports specifically gave this reason for experimenting with amosite in 85% magnesia.

The second reason is that the market price of amosite, including overseas freight, was generally comparable, if not favorable, to the price of long fiber chrysotile. This is also consistent with the previously stated reason concerning the shortage of suitable Canadian fiber.

The third reason would be that by adding amosite you simply made a better product in some instances. And this can lead to lowered production costs due to fewer rejects and less material usage.

Finally, inasmuch as this research is for the benefit of the trust, I have collected a number of documents which can provide background on these matters in greater detail. I have included an excerpt from our Claims Court appeal, discussing our arguments on the specifications issue, as well as documents covering amosite and crocidolite use in general, government requirements for amosite, and some of Manville's attempts to provide the required amosite products. Some of these documents I think are so pertinent that I'm only sorry they didn't surface before - they would have been very supportive of Don's testimony.

Should you require any further information on this issue, please let me know.

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