IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

BEAUMONT DIVISION

FILED
U. S. DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
NOV 13 1969
JAMES R. COONEY, CLERK
BY DEPUTY

CLARENCE BOREL

VS.

FIBREBOARD PAPER PRODUCTS CORPORATION, ET AL

CIVIL ACTION NO. 6449

ORIGINAL ANSWER OF DEFENDANT, FIBREBOARD CORPORATION, TO PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL COMPLAINT, FILED SUBJECT TO THIS DEFENDANT'S MOTION FOR MORE DEFINITE STATEMENT AND MOTION TO STRIKE CERTAIN ALLEGATIONS

TO THE HONORABLE JUDGE OF SAID COURT:

COMES NOW the defendant, Fibreboard Corporation (named herein as Fibreboard Paper Products Corporation), and subject to its motion for more definite statement and motion to strike certain allegations, files this, its original answer to plaintiff's original complaint, and for such answer this defendant would show the Court:

1.

Assuming that the domicile and place of incorporation of the various corporate defendants is correctly alleged, it is admitted that this Court has jurisdiction based upon diversity of citizenship of the parties.

2.

In reply to Paragraph 2, it is admitted that the claim asserted by plaintiff exceeds the jurisdictional amount.

3.

This defendant can neither admit nor deny the allegations as to the residence of the plaintiff for lack of knowledge.

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4.

In answer to Paragraph 4, it is admitted that Fibreboard Corporation (formerly Fibreboard Paper Products Corporation), and its predecessors, has been and is now engaged in the manufacture of materials used for pipe insulation which contain some asbestos. It is denied that the insulation products manufactured by this defendant are placed on the market to be purchased and used by the general public, but to the contrary, this defendant sells its product to insulation contractors who employ experienced insulation workers in the application of the product.

This defendant does not purport to answer said allegations contained in Paragraph 4 for each and all of the other defendants.

5.

In answer to Paragraph 5, this defendant has filed a motion to strike said allegations. Subject to the motion to strike, and in the event the motion is overruled, this defendant in answer to said allegations says that it is without knowledge as to the employment of plaintiff as an insulator between the years 1936 to 1969, and it is likewise without knowledge that he was required to handle large quantities of the products manufactured and distributed by the above named defendants, including this defendant.

This defendant denies each and all of the allegations contained in the last sentence of the same Paragraph 5, and it specifically denies that the insulation products manufactured by it were dangerous.

6.

The allegations in Paragraph 6 are denied.

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7.

This defendant has moved to strike Paragraph 7, Subdivisions (b) and (e).

In reply to the allegations contained in Paragraph 7, this defendant answers only for itself, but it denies that any injury and damage complained of by plaintiff was directly and/or proximately caused by any negligence or carelessness of this defendant.

In reply to the allegations in Paragraph 7(a), this defendant answers only for itself, and it denies said allegations.

This defendant says that the allegations in this paragraph are too vague, general and indefinite and do not apprise this defendant of any date or dates on which the plaintiff worked with any materials manufactured by this defendant, and he does not specify what the materials were, the name thereof, or their content. Under this set of facts, this defendant cannot answer such allegations as to any specific product manufactured by it.

Subject to the objections and the foregoing comment, the allegations of Paragraph 7(b), (c), (d) and (e) are all denied.

8.

In reply to the allegations contained in Paragraph 8, this defendant denies that it breached any warranty which may have existed as to its products and as to the plaintiff.

The allegations of Paragraph 8(a) are denied.

Defendant has moved to strike Paragraph 8, Subdivisions (b), (c) and (d).

Subject to the objections on file and the motion to strike, the allegations of Subdivisions (b), (c) and (d) of Paragraph 8 are denied.

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9.

This defendant has moved to strike the allegations contained in Paragraph 9 of the complaint for the reason that the doctrine of res ipsa loquitur does not apply and could not apply to the factual situation herein alleged.

Subject to this defendant's motion to strike, the allegations of Paragraph 9 are denied.

10.

In reply to the allegations in Paragraph 10, this defendant denies that plaintiff sustained any injury as a result of any act or omission on the part of this defendant and denies that plaintiff was injured as a result of any breach of warranty of this defendant. This defendant has no knowledge or information at this time as to the cause or causes of plaintiff's alleged disability, if any, as it has had no time for investigation, it has had no physical examination of the plaintiff or any other information.

Subject to the foregoing, this defendant denies the allegations in said paragraph and it denies that plaintiff's alleged disability and condition has resulted from any act or omission of this defendant or from the use of any product manufactured by this defendant.

This defendant expressly denies any violation of the Uniform Commercial Code adopted under the laws of the State of Texas, for the reason that said Code was not effective in Texas until midnight, June 30, 1966, and was not retroactive.

11.

The allegations of Paragraph 11 are denied.

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12.

The allegations of Paragraph 12 are denied.

13.

This defendant denies the allegations in Paragraph 13 and denies that plaintiff is entitled to recover any sum against this defendant.

14.

This defendant has moved to strike Paragraph 14, which is a claim for gross negligence. Subject to the action of the Court on the motion to strike this paragraph, this defendant denies the allegations contained in Paragraph 14.

15.

This defendant has moved to strike Paragraph 15 of the complaint for the reason that such is a repetition of Paragraph 13.

Subject to the action of the Court on the motion to strike, this defendant denies the allegations contained in Paragraph 15 and says that it is nothing more than a duplication of Paragraph 13.

16.

This defendant denies the allegations contained in the prayer and denies that plaintiff is entitled to recover any damages, either actual, special or exemplary, and denies that plaintiff is entitled to any relief against this defendant.

AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES

First Affirmative Defense

This defendant denies that the plaintiff sustained any injury as a result of contact or use of any product manufactured by this defendant.

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Second Affirmative Defense

Further answering, and by way of affirmative defense, defendant says that the products which this defendant manufactured and sold were at all times reasonably fit and suitable for the purposes for which they were manufactured and sold, and defendant denies that the same were in anywise defective for the use for which they were manufactured.

Third Affirmative Defense

If plaintiff did sustain any injury as a result of the use of any product manufactured by this defendant, which is expressly denied, then such injury was sustained as a result of the occupation of the plaintiff, in that he had been engaged as an insulator or worker in the insulation field for a number of years (alleged to be 33 years), and at all times knew that he was working in dust-laden air which contained asbestos dust, as well as other dust particles, part of which were created by his own work and the work of other insulators, and by the failure of his employer or the owner of the premises on which he was working to provide facilities for the elimination of dust-laden air, and therefore any such injury as he may have sustained was some occupational disease resulting from his long continued occupation as an insulator and not as a result of any isolated incident or contact with any product manufactured by this defendant. This defendant says that it is not legally liable or responsible for any occupational disease which was suffered or sustained by plaintiff in the course of his employments over a number of years; and further, this defendant denies that the plaintiff worked with products manufactured by this defendant.

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Fourth Affirmative Defense

This defendant denies that any product or products which it manufactured and sold for heat insulation purposes in anywise caused or brought about any injury or illness, if any, to the plaintiff, and this defendant says that the physical conditions of which plaintiff complains was in nowise caused or brought about by any product manufactured or sold by this defendant, but such condition was due solely to disease and other causes or to the acts and omissions of third persons, and the acts of the plaintiff.

Fifth Affirmative Defense

Further answering herein, and while denying that the plaintiff sustained any injury as a result of contact or use of any product manufactured by this defendant, if he did sustain injury or did sustain an occupational disease as a result of the use of any insulation product manufactured by this defendant, separately, or in conjunction with products manufactured by other defendants, then this defendant says that plaintiff was guilty of various acts, wrongs and omissions, each and all of which amounted to negligence in the performance of his work and occupation, which acting together or separately was a proximate cause of his injury. In this connection, this defendant would show that plaintiff failed to use and utilize any safety devices such as masks and respirators for breathing; that he failed to request the use of such masks and respirators; that he failed to request his employer to furnish blowers and other equipment to remove the dust-laden air and he worked in dust-laden air with full knowledge that he was inhaling such dust-laden air; and he continued to work with insulation materials containing some asbestos after he knew, or

in the exercise of ordinary care should have known, that it was affecting his health.

Sixth Affirmative Defense

This defendant says that if plaintiff sustained any injury as a result of the use of any material or materials manufactured by this defendant, which is denied, the danger, if any, arising from the continued use of such material or materials was open and obvious and was well known to the plaintiff, or should have been known to him; but nevertheless, he continued to work as an insulator and continued to subject himself to air which was laden with insulation material.

In the alternative, if there was any danger and such was not open and obvious and apparent to plaintiff at all times, nevertheless, he knew at all times of the dangers involved with insulation materials containing some asbestos and in working in dust-laden air where insulation materials were in use, and he continued to use and to work with such materials and under such conditions with such knowledge, and therefore this defendant owed him no duty to warn him of any potential dangers involved, and he is therefore barred from any recovery under the theory of volenti non fit injuria.

Seventh Affirmative Defense

If plaintiff did sustain any injury as a result of the use of any product manufactured by this defendant, which is denied, then such occurred more than two (2) years prior to the filing of this suit on the 20th day of October, 1969, and such cause of action is barred by the two (2) year statute of limitation of the State of Texas.

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If plaintiff did sustain any injury as a result of any product manufactured by this defendant, in any state of the union, then this defendant pleads each and all of the statutes of limitations as to said alleged cause of action under the laws of the State of Texas and under the laws of any state where such alleged cause of action arose.

Eighth Affirmative Defense

If plaintiff did sustain any injury as a result of the use of any product manufactured by this defendant, which is denied, then such occurred more than four (4) years prior to the filing of this suit on the 20th day of October, 1969, and such cause of action is barred by the four (4) year statute of limitation of the State of Texas.

Ninth Affirmative Defense

Further answering, this defendant says that plaintiff was an experienced insulation worker according to his allegations and knew at all times that he was working with asbestos and products containing asbestos, as well as other products, which were harmful to him; or in the alternative, if he did not know this, his employers at all times knew that they were working with insulation materials which contained some asbestos, and said employers had knowledge of the fact that particles of said products could enter the air when said product was cut or applied, and his employers likewise had knowledge that if blowers or fans were not used in the area that their employees would be subject to the dust hazard and inhalation of dust; and further, it is common knowledge that if an individual works in an area where the air is laden with dust, that the individual will breathe this dust into his nose and body system unless the employee uses

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some mask, respirator or some protective device, or unless the employer provides some means whereby the dust is removed from the air as a safety measure.

Tenth Affirmative Defense

This defendant denies the existence of any warranty on the part of this defendant and denies any fault or breach of warranty on the part of this defendant, but to the contrary, says that the insulation product or products manufactured by it were at all times reasonably fit and suitable for the purpose of insulation which was the purpose for which they were manufactured and sold, and the plaintiff's injury, if any, did not result from any defect in said product. Further, any and all dust conditions which resulted from use of the product were created during the application thereof at which time the product was cut or changed from the original form in which it was manufactured by this defendant, and the conditions under which the plaintiff worked were at all times prescribed by his employer or the owner of the premises where the plaintiff was employed. This defendant had no responsibility for the condition or conditions at the place of work where plaintiff was performing his work.

Eleventh Affirmative Defense

Further answering herein, and in the alternative, this defendant says that the plaintiff's alleged injuries and damages, if any, were caused solely, or in the alternative, were proximately caused by acts, wrongs, omissions and negligence of third parties, or a third party, for whose acts this defendant is in nowise liable or responsible; or in the alternative, if

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plaintiff sustained any injury from the use of any product, or from any breach of warranty, none of which are admitted, but denied, then such was the result of the fault or breach of warranty of third parties other than this defendant.

Twelfth Affirmative Defense

Further answering herein, and in the alternative, this defendant says that the plaintiff's claims to injury and damage, if any, were the result of an unavoidable accident.

Thirteenth Affirmative Defense

Further answering herein, and in the alternative, this defendant would show that there is and was no legal liability on the part of this defendant because of the fact that the alleged happenings in question were brought about or caused by transitory conditions arising in the course of the work which the plaintiff was doing, and ordinarily incident thereto; and plaintiff and his employers used their own manner, method and means of performing such work, and this defendant owed no duty with respect to such work, nor was there any relationship as between plaintiff and this defendant which created any duty on the part of this defendant as to the manner or method in which the work was done or the conditions under which the plaintiff performed such work.

Fourteenth Affirmative Defense

Further answering herein, this defendant says that during the period of time for which the plaintiff is asserting a claim and injury that the State of Texas had enacted a workmen's compensation law which provided that the disease of asbestosis is an occupational disease for which a person engaged in the occupation of an asbestos worker or working with asbestos products can claim workmen's compensation disability benefits

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against his last employer at the time the disease is discovered. According to the plaintiff's pleading, he worked with asbestos and asbestos products over a period of some 33 years, and if he has asbestosis such is due to the nature of his occupation and was acquired over a long period of time and is not the result of working with any particular product or products but was due to the nature of his employment.

Fifteenth Affirmative Defense

As a further grounds of relief, and pleading in the alternative, this defendant says that if any judgment is entered herein jointly and severally against it and other defendants, that in such event this defendant is entitled to contribution against such other defendants in accordance with the provisions of the laws of the State of Texas or the laws of any state where any alleged cause of action arose.

WHEREFORE, this defendant prays judgment of the Court that plaintiff take nothing against it and that it go hence and recover its costs; in the alternative, that it have judgment for contribution against the other defendants as set out above.

Respectfully submitted;

WELLER, WHEELUS & GREEN
P. O. BOX 350
BEAUMONT, TEXAS 77704

BY _____
GEO. A. WELLER,
ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANT,
FIBREBOARD CORPORATION.

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CROSS-ACTION OF DEFENDANT,
FIBREBOARD CORPORATION

TO SAID HONORABLE COURT:

COMES NOW Fibreboard Corporation, one of the defendants in the above styled and numbered cause, and supplementing its original answer to plaintiff's original complaint and complaining of Combustion Engineering, Inc.; Johns-Manville Products Corporation; Owens-Corning Fiber Glass Corporation; Eagle-Picher Industries, Inc.; Pittsburgh Corning Corporation; Unarco Industries, Inc.; Philip Carey Corporation; Armstrong Contracting and Supply Corporation; Standard Asbestos Manufacturing & Insulating Company and Ruberoid Company, all hereinafter called cross-defendants, says:

1.

This defendant says that if plaintiff sustained any injury as the result of any act or omission on the part of the defendant, Fibreboard Corporation, which this defendant denies, then such injury was caused and proximately caused and contributed to by the acts and omissions of the remaining defendants above named, and each of them, the defendant, Unaraco Industries, Inc., being a successor in interest to Unaraco Asbestos and Rubber Company, and if any judgment is entered herein against the defendant, Fibreboard Corporation, then in such event this defendant this defendant is entitled to indemnity from each and all of the other defendants; or in the alternative, is entitled to contribution against each and all of the other defendants in accordance with the provisions of the laws of the State of Texas and any other state where such alleged cause of action, if any, arose.

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2.

This defendant adopts and alleges each and every act against the cross-defendants herein as is alleged in the plaintiff's original complaint against each and all of said defendants.

WHEREFORE, this defendant prays judgment of the Court that plaintiff take nothing against it and that it go hence with its costs; in the alternative, that it have judgment for indemnity; or in the further alternative, that it have judgment for contribution as set out above.

Respectfully submitted;

WELLER, WHEELUS & GREEN
P. O. BOX 350
BEAUMONT, TEXAS 77704

BY Geo. A. Weller
GEO. A. WELLER,
ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANT,
FIBREBOARD CORPORATION.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that a copy of the foregoing original answer of defendant, Fibreboard Corporation, to plaintiff's original complaint was delivered to Mr. Ward Stephenson, Stephenson & Thompson, Stephenson Building, Orange, Texas, attorney for plaintiff, and to Mr. George E. Duncan, Mr. Dale Dowell, Mr. Gordon R. Pate, Mr. W. N. Arnold, Jr., Mr. Ben L. Reynolds, Mr. James W. Mehaffy, Sr., Mr. Charles S. Pipkin, Mr. John G. Tucker, Mr. Gerald P. Coley and Mr. Robert E. Barnes, Jr., by mailing a copy by certified mail addressed to their respective addresses of record in this case on the 12th day of November, 1969.

Geo. A. Weller
OF COUNSEL

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