HWB

NOTED V.B.

June 23, 1952

Glenn A. Coughlan, Esq.
P. O. Box 1634
Boise, Idaho

Dear Mr. Coughlan:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of June 12th with reference to a claim for permanent total disability allegedly arising from fibrosis of the lungs due to breathing rock wool dust.

Enclosed you will find a reprint of an article by Dr. Lawrence T. Fairhall entitled "Rock Wool in Relation to Health" which appeared in the November, 1935 issue of The Journal of Industrial Hygiene. This pamphlet will serve the double purpose of showing you that rock wool of Johns-Manville manufacture contains nothing of toxic significance and will, at the same time, provide you with an analysis of that material.

You will note that silica is present in the form of a silicate and not as free silica. This is important because it is well established that only silica in the latter form can produce silicosis. You will also be interested in learning that a [redacted] conducted by the Industrial Health Section of the [redacted] Insurance Company at one of our plants where rock wool has been manufactured for approximately fifty years. This survey was very thorough and included examination of the X-rays of nearly 400 employees, the great majority of whom had been engaged in the manufacture and handling of rock wool for more than ten years and a large number for more than twenty-five years. Not a single case of silicosis or even of abnormal lung fibrosis was discovered as a result of these examinations and we were advised that we might safely conclude rock wool dust was "innocuous from the viewpoint of lung fibrosis". Moreover, never before or since this survey took place, have we heard of a single instance where a workman contracted silicosis as a result of exposure to our rock wool.

Trusting the foregoing satisfactorily answers your inquiry, I am

Very truly yours,

ALF: k

Arthur L. Fisk, Jr.

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