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ASBESTOS TEXTILE INSTITUTE
Air Hygiene Committee Meeting
Wednesday, March 11, 1953

In attendance:

J. W. Weber, D. R. Holmes, T. G. Schmidt, E. T. Johnson, A. H. Jackson, and Guest K. W. Smith, M.D.

Dr. K. W. Smith, Medical Director for Johns-Manville, discussed the medical aspects of asbestosis. The disturbances to pulmonary function, and the pathology of the disease were illustrated. Differentiation of silicosis and asbestosis was clearly outlined. It was established that-

a. asbestosis does not predispose to tuberculosis
b. asbestos dust per se is relatively innocuous; it is the long fibre (10 to 50 microns) that are the fibrosis producing elements.
c. the amosite fibre produce pulmonary damage more rapidly than the chrysotile
d. there is considerable variation in individual susceptibility to identical exposures
e. in addition to a sound engineering program an adequate medical program is essential to disease control
f. job applicants with healed tuberculosis, poor respiratory system, or deformed chest structure should not be assigned to asbestos exposures.

Considerable discussion ensued, during which numerous specific questions of the Committee members were answered.

It was the concensus of the Committee that considerable value to the Industry could be obtained through a meeting of the medical personnel of the Institute members. It was recommended that company-related doctors be invited to the next meeting of the Air Hygiene Committee on June 11th. It was proposed that at this meeting a program providing for the accumulation and exchange of disease experience of the member companies be developed.

The discussion of air sampling techniques brought to light criticism of currently accepted methods, and the realization that surveys to date were recorded in terms of dust particles rather than fibres. In the light of the Saranac research results, fibre concentrations are the critical factor. Dust particles per se are of nuisance value only. It is the recommendation of the Committee that research be done to determine which of the several available types of air sampling equipment is most efficient in collecting and evaluating air-born fibre concentrations.

Sub committees chairmaned by D. R. Holmes and T. G. Schmidt have been appointed to investigate these two facets of our problem and report will be made at the next meeting.

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It was agreed that these basic inquiries should be made before a more comprehensive proposal for an industry-wide hygiene survey program is submitted to the Institute.

Papers on specific successful applications of dust control will be presented at subsequent meetings.

H. M. Jackson
Chairman

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