MINUTES OF THE ASBESTOS TEXTILE INSTITUTE

AIR HYGIENE COMMITTEE MEETING

June 4, 1956

IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

D. R. Holmes
Ralph Smith, General Asbestos
Dr. Kenneth Smith, Johns-Manville
Mr. George Griswold, Southern Asbestos

MORNING SESSION

#1

The first item on the agenda was the discussion of Asbestosis and Cancer in relation to the Taylor case at Lancaster, Pa., in which a state referee decided the case in favor of the employee on the basis of finding an Asbestosis-Cancer relationship. This decision was made by the referee on the basis of writings by Dr. Hueper of the National Institute of Health, Bethesda, Maryland.

It is Dr. Kenneth Smith's opinion that most medical men consider that a normal X-Ray pattern must be shown in order to establish an Asbestosis-Cancer relationship.

Prior to this meeting a memorandum was received from Industrial Hygiene Foundation entitled PROPOSED EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY OF LUNG CANCER IN ASBESTOS WORKERS FOR THE ASBESTOS TEXTILE INSTITUTE.

There are two questions raised in reference to this memorandum -

1. Whether there is a relation between Cancer and Asbestosis, and

2. Whether a relationship exists between Lung Cancer and considerable exposure to asbestos fibres and dust.

There are about 2,000 workers in this industry whose employment records could be a basis for such a survey. During the weeks of April 23rd and May 7th, visits were made to seven plants of the Asbestos Textile Institute. Conferences were held with representatives of management from each plant. The purpose of this visit was to determine the extent of availability of medical records and employment records in a period of time covered by them. Each plant was questioned regarding the number of known cases of Asbestosis and Lung Cancer, if any.

The I.H.F. advises that there are at least 1,800 asbestos textile workers employed under observable conditions for periods sufficiently long to get a total of no less than 15,000 person-years. They also advise that this should be an adequate basis on which to predict with 90% accuracy, providing the plant incidence is actually higher than that in the general population.

It is anticipated that the field work for such a study would consume approximately six months. An analysis of the data and any necessary review in preparation of the report an additional six months. On this basis, cost of the

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study is estimated at $17,500.00 including travel and out-of-pocket expenses. The cost of the initial fact finding survey was $864.00. This was slightly less than the $1,000.00 estimated. It was the desire of the committee that a copy of this memorandum from the I.H.F. be sent to each member of the Air Hygiene Committee along with a letter urging that each member of the committee impress the importance of this program to the Officers of his Company. This has already been done.

I had a long discussion with Dr. Kenneth Smith in reference to this program covering the relationship of Asbestosis to Cancer. It is his opinion that it is of primary importance that this program be adopted as soon as possible, so that the I.H.F. could publish the results of this survey along with the results from a survey undertaken by them for the Quebec mining association.

On May 11, 1956, a letter was received by the Chairman from a Dr. Kenneth M. Lynch, President, of the Medical College of South Carolina. Dr. Lynch is doing some work in relation to the effect of Asbestos dust on laboratory animals exposed for prolonged periods in dusting chambers. He is primarily interested in enlisting the aid of the Asbestos Industry in this effort, which for the past eight years has been and is presently being supported by the National Cancer Institute of the U. S. Public Health Service. This letter was discussed at the meeting with Dr. Kenneth Smith, who has worked along with Dr. Lynch for many years.

Dr. Lynch is also doing work for another member of the Institute and has been doing so for some time. Dr. Lynch is performing this work in an effort to clarify the relation of Asbestosis and Cancer of the Lung.

It was the opinion of the committee that the Chairman should write Dr. Lynch and thank him for his interest in Industry and its problems, however, advising him that we have other programs being instigated at this time and cannot, therefore, enter into any programs for the support of his work.

#2

We had a discussion on the Spencer Stock Conditioner. We all agreed that this type of conditioner is probably the best on the market and that it was to operate on small percentages of oil - less than 1%, providing the humidity is under control, as Stock will ordinarily not run with more than 50% relative humidity.

John Weber now has a heavy type bag loader in operation and is very well satisfied with it. It is practically dust free.

The next discussion was in reference to the amount of dust in asbestos fibres received from the mines. However, at a later date we should receive some figures on these dust percentages and at that time we hope to take the subject up with the mines.

We next talked on the Wheelobrater Dust Collection system. Ralph Smith and George Griswold related their experiences in the installation and operation of this type unit. As we have said before, the Industry now has several Wheelobrater collectors in operation and to our knowledge all are operating in a satisfactory manner. This type of unit is comparatively maintenance free.

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Our next discussion concerned compensation as it is handled in several states. This discussion was informative to each one of us as it gives an opportunity to compare one state system against the other.

AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING

1 - Continuing the discussion of the memorandum from the I.H.F. on Asbestosis and Cancer.

2 - Continuing the discussion of spraying fibres with oil with a view toward the elimination of dust at the source.

3 - Report on general improvements and elimination of dust by whatever means.

D. R. Holmes, Chairman
Air Hygiene Committee
Asbestos Textile Institute

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