1604 01BA

CHC
January 21, 1960

J. F. Lowry, Toronto Plant

Health Program

During my last visit with you I requested some information concerning workmen's compensation costs and Ivan Sloane has sent this to me. Now I would like to comment on certain aspects of your health program. You will recall that in March 1955, I wrote to you indicating that you had several employees who should have no further dust exposure. At that time, I pointed out that the Division of Industrial Hygiene did not know that we had a silicosis hazard in our plant. Dr. Grant Cunningham advised us that we would be considered as a company within the meaning of the Silicosis Act should any of our employees develop a compensable pulmonary disease.

I reviewed numerous x-ray files of our employees in Dr. Riddell's office on my recent trip. There is no doubt whatsoever that several employees have developed an occupational pulmonary disease because of their work in your plant. This is regretable because to develop silicosis in the relatively short period of time that your plant has been in operation indicates that these men must have had a considerable exposure to dust.

Throughout this same period there have been several dust surveys in your plant. The results have been evaluated and commented upon locally and by Hugh Jackson. Specific areas in need of control have been identified. The x-ray films of men working in these areas corroborate the lack of control.

It is disturbing to realize that four or five years ago, warning was given by Dr. Riddell, Dr. Corson and myself that several of these men should have no further dust exposure. These admonitions have been repeated annually but today the men still are working in dust. It seems to me that we in management must consider ourselves responsible if an employee's health is impaired or ruined by a cause which is preventable. We who are in staff positions must act in an advisory capacity. Only those in operating management can take positive action if such conditions are to be corrected.

While these men have occupational pulmonary disease today they are not disabled. Inevitably, some will become disabled and entitled to workmen's compensation benefits. When that occurs there can be a 50% increase in your compensation rate. Based on 1959 figures, this would be an annual increase of approximately $16,500 per year.

I sincerely hope that steps will be taken to prevent further dust exposure for these and other men. Job transfer is one method of accomplishing this, but it is the least effective. Proper control of dust at its source, adequate material handling methods and a strict program of good housekeeping is essential to protect human health and prevent financial loss to the Company.

Published by AsbestosClaims.Law
asbestosclaims.law/library/11301/1

I would appreciate knowing what further assistance you feel I may give to your control program.

Kenneth W. Smith, M.D.

cc: C. W. Hite
A. G. Sinclair, Toronto
R. S. Gardner, Toronto
I. H. Sloane, Toronto Plant