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April 4, 1959

Mrs. E. G. Sylvan
[illegible]
Syosset, Long Island
New York

Dear Mrs. Sylvan:

Someone in our sales organization has asked me to write you concerning a skin rash which developed on your son after he had fingered an unbagged sample of our Rock Wool Batts. I understand that your physician would like to have the composition of our Rock Wool so that your son can be treated for an allergy.

Our mineral wool is made from limestone and black furnace slag which are heated to a melting point. The molten rock is separated and mix with a small amount of linseed oil which acts as a binder. The separated material is cooled in a large chamber and formed into the batts on which your son played.

While it is true that we occasionally see some skin irritation among people with sensitive skin who handle Rock Wool, this irritation is not of the allergic type. The rash is the result of a mechanical irritation of the skin by very small splinters of the wool. We advise our employees who develop a skin irritation to cover exposed skin areas while handling the wool and to take a thorough shower immediately after work. With these simple precautions they develop no further skin rash. Among the several hundreds of employees who have been manufacturing this product for many years we have seen no true allergic response. Therefore, I feel confident that if your son developed a skin eruption after contact with Rock Wool, it was a mechanical rather than allergic response.

I trust that this information will be useful to your treating physician. However, if he should desire additional information, please ask him to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth W. Smith, M.D.
Medical Director

cc: H. M. Ball
L. A. Fowler
J. F. O'Hara
W. J. Harrigan
J. H. MacKay

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