ASBESTOS, Quebec - May 20 - The following statement on health conditions in Asbestos was issued today by Dr. Kenneth W. Smith, chief medical officer of Canadian Johns-Manville operations at Asbestos.

" There appears to be considerable misunderstanding and confusion in the public's mind over asbestos dust and its effect on the health of those working in the asbestos area.

" In an effort to clarify the situation I would like to outline what precautions Canadian Johns-Manville has taken over the years to safeguard the health of its employees.

" As I have made a close study of health conditions at Asbestos for a number of years I will naturally confine my remarks to health conditions as they exist in the immediate area surrounding the town of Asbestos. There is a tendency to associate the town of Asbestos with the Thetford mine district where asbestos deposits are also located. But the Thetford mine area is about seventy miles from Asbestos. Canadian Johns-Manville has no connection with the Thetford mine region. We operate no mines, mills or factories there.

" My observations are based on a close study of all health conditions in our community and a careful physical check-up of all C.J-M. employees.

" Since 1935 we have taken more than 80,000 X-Rays of employees. They are on file at C.J-M.'s clinic at Asbestos and are available for study by all recognized authorities. At our clinic we also have the most modern equipment for taking X-Rays.

"All applicants for jobs at C.J-M. are give X-Rays before being employed. And once a year all regular employees are given X-Rays.

" So many figures on tuberculosis have been published in so many different ways that it is quite understandable why confusion exists.

Published by AsbestosClaims.Law
asbestosclaims.law/library/11318/1

" Here are the latest figures available at the Department of Health for the Province of Quebec. In 1947 there were five deaths due to tuberculosis in the town of Asbestos. All of these were females. It is interesting to note that in the same year eleven persons died of heart disease, six of cancer and four of nephritis.

"In 1946 there were also five deaths in Asbestos due to tuberculosis. In the same year six persons died of heart disease, five of cancer and seven of nephritis.

" The cases of tuberculosis in Asbestos are no greater than for the rest of the Province of Quebec. And in many instances they are less than for a number of other industrial towns in the Province.

" According to a recent survey made in the United States the incident of tuberculosis among 55,000 asbestos workers is no higher than for that of any other industrial group.

" In the public mind the question of asbestosis has been raised in connection with tuberculosis. There is definitely no association between the two. Medical science has devoted considerable time, money and effort on this problem. And the overwhelming opinion of medical scientists is that asbestosis is neither a cause of tuberculosis nor is in any way associated with it.

" Perhaps the public is confused over silicosis and asbestosis. Silicosis is caused by the constant inhalation of free silica in quarries, foundries and hard rock mines. Our mine at Asbestos is not a hard-rock mine and there is no silicosis problem.

"As for asbestosis, there have been only two cases recognised by medical science in Asbestos in the last fifty years. Canadian Johns-Manville has spent more than $1,000,000 on dust control and is continually making every effort to reduce dust even more. Dust counts taken in Asbestos by Health authorities show that on a normal operating day nuisance dust in the streets compares favorably with that of other industrial areas in Canada."

Published by AsbestosClaims.Law
asbestosclaims.law/library/11318/2