March 15, 1957

Mr. George Finley, Personnel Manager
Black, Sivalls & Bryson, Inc.

Dear Mr. Finley:

Your request for information concerning 85 per cent magnesia products has been forwarded to me for reply, and I am pleased to give you the available information.

This type of insulating product contains approximately 12 per cent asbestos fibre. To the extent that asbestos fibre may be contained in the dust created by the cutting and fitting, there may be a possible health hazard which should be controlled.

In our experience asbestosis (fibrosis in the lungs resulting from inhalation of asbestos fibre) results from heavy exposure over a long period of time. Various authorities have indicated ten or more years of exposure as necessary for the development of disabling asbestosis. A report of experimental work in this field was made in the January 1951 issue of the A. M. A. ARCHIVES OF INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE AND OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE titled "Experimental Studies of Asbestosis" by Dr. Arthur J. Vorwald.

I do not know whether the particular state in which you operate has a hygiene code which specifies a limit for asbestos dust. A good guide for control purposes, however, is the threshold limit list of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists which indicates a maximum allowable concentration for asbestos of 5 million particles per cubic foot.

In our own operations we control the potential exposure through point of operation ventilation control, vacuum cleaning of work areas, the use of U. S. Bureau of Mines approved respirators for intermittent exposures, job methods which minimize the creation and dispersal of dust, and a vigorous program of good housekeeping. Medical control is established through periodic physical examinations and chest x-rays which are reviewed and evaluated by a doctor competent in the field of pneumoconiosis.

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Should there be other information that you desire, do not hesitate to request such.

Very truly yours,

H. M. Jackson, Manager
Industrial Health Program

cc: M. W. Burleson (3)
H. M. Ball

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