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April 25, 1949

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T. R. Turnbull - Room 901

Asbestos Pipe Covering

A survey was made on January 14, 1949 by the Industrial Health Section of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company covering the use of perlite in the manufacture of asbestos pipe covering. The analysis of the samples taken indicates that dust counts were high for even a nuisance dust. The perlite had a free silica content of approximately 13.5% and on this basis the concentrations were considerably higher than the 20 million particles per cubic foot of air listed in the New Jersey State Department Health Code.

The free silica is apparently of an amorphous type since no crystalline forms were determined on microscopic examination. Amorphous silica, while not as harmful as the crystalline forms, cannot be considered innocuous and has been known to have caused lung damage. Tentative conclusions of the Saranac Organization who have conducted our research on diatomaceous earth confirm this.

It is my understanding that consideration is being given to the use of perlite in several of our productilines and I would recommend that adequate provision be made for ventilation and dust control in each such process.

H. M. Jackson

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