General Headquarters
September 18, 1956

R. V. Lohse

Western Gold and Platinum Company
San Francisco, Calif.

Attached are the original and three copies of a letter addressed to Western Gold and Platinum Company, San Francisco, California, outlining the possible health hazards to be anticipated in the fabrication of Colorlith.

H. M. Jackson

Attachs.
cc:
H. M. Ball

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September 18, 1956

Western Gold and Platinum Company
San Francisco, California

Gentlemen:

Your request for information concerning the potential health hazard of Colorlith dust has been referred to me for reply.

Both silica and asbestos fiber are used in the formation of Colorlith. These materials are potentially hazardous if exposure to sufficient quantities over long periods of time is involved. Silicosis and asbestosis may result from excessive exposure. These diseases are within the broad classification of pneumonoconiosis (dust on the lung) and although distinct disease entities, both result in a fibrosis which reduce the performance efficiency of the lung.

The state in which you operate may have standards to apply to exposures to these materials, but if not, the standards of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists should be referred to.

For free quartz silica, the 1956 list of threshold limits published by the A. C. G. I..H. shows the maximum allowable concentration to be five million particles per cubic foot for materials containing 50% or more quartz silica, and twenty million particles per cubic foot for materials having 5% to 50% quartz silica. In our experience, the latter standard would apply to the dusts arising from the sawing and grinding of the Colorlith board.

The 1956 A. C. G. I. H. list shows the threshold limit for asbestos dust to be five million particles per cubic foot.

These limits apply to dusts of particle sizes ten microns or less. Particles larger than this are not considered to be of hygienic importance. Since particles of ten microns and less are not visually observable, evaluation of contamination can only be made by industrial hygiene sampling methods. For dusts of this nature the standard procedure utilizes the Greenburg-Smith standard or midget impinger apparatus and microscopic analytical procedure as standardized by the United States Public Health Service.

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I would presume that the local State Department of Health or Labor would provide industrial hygiene survey services to evaluate the effectiveness of dust control methods. If this is not so, there are commercial services available for this purpose.

In our own operations, we have developed satisfactory dust control through the hooding of cutting and grinding equipment at the point of operation. At points at which the operation is intermittent and complete control has not been effected, the use of U. S. Bureau of Mines approved type respirators will provide protection.

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: R. V. Lohse (3)
H. M. Ball