Johns-Manville

Internal Correspondence

To: Paul Kotin, M.D.

Date: July 29, 1975

From: W. A. Cooper

Copies: E. M. Fenner; W. B. Reitze

Subject: JEFFREY MINING & MILLING OPERATIONS

During the week of July 21-25, I was in Asbestos with our senior cameraman to begin shooting film segments for our Asbestos and Health film. I was quite disappointed with conditions in both the mining and milling areas.

During our film shooting I was in just about every area in Mills 5 and 6, and the pit itself. We decided to do most of our shooting in Mill 6 because the equipment was in better condition and there was less dust and fiber accumulation.

In Mill 5, there was some acculation of dust on the fans in the baghouse. Before we could film, we had to have one of the large blowers cleaned.

The bagging operation on the main floor was shocking. There were accumulations of dust everywhere. It took more than an hour to clean up one bagging unit of visible dust before filming. At another bag unit, I noticed an ankle-high accumulation of fiber, which was being shoveled into an open cart for disposal by a worker, who was not wearing a respirator.

On the main floor, I noticed bag after bag of packed fiber broken or purposely opened, but in no case were they taped or resealed. I was told they were opened for sample-taking, but still they were not resealed. Fiber continued to spill from the bags onto the floor, where other workers tracked through it.

Bags of fiber which had not passed quality control were being taken by jitney--some bags were open--to an open rail car where they were unceremoniously dumped in a puff of dust. Other waste material, with fiber evident also was being dumped into open rail cars.

Inbetween the rails and on both sides, accumulations of loose fiber were visible. Loose fiber also was obvious in the truck loading area, although some of it had been pushed toward the walls by automatic sweepers.

I saw a QC man at the bagging operation open at least four bags, grab a handful of fiber, throw it into an open plate, and then break it apart and swish it around. He did not wear a respirator.

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In one area of Mill 5, where there are a number of rock screens and air separators, we had to stop filming three times in order to have a team wipe down fiber dust on the equipment. Our photo flood lights revealed what I would call moderate to heavy concentrations of fiber in the air.

In the pit area, the operators of our drill rig and shovels, and drivers of some of our large 100-ton trucks were working with their windows open, instead of taking advantage of their ventilated cabs. Apparently, the ventilation systems were not functioning well enough for their comfort, but they were also apparently exposing themselves to large amounts of dust.

At the new gyratory crusher, the industrial hygienist who accompanied us had to tell the control operator to use the sprinkler system that prevents dust generation when ore is dumped. He claimed it hadn't been working properly, but was able to activate it manually. Also, the vacuum cleaning port at the crusher was clogged and inoperable.

At a chute loading port outside the conveyors where a sprinkler system also had been installed to keep down dust, it was not being used and the driver had to be cautioned.

I also saw fiber accumulations around loading ramps, in open garbage cans, on stairs, near outside conveyors, and other sites. Even the elevator operator was using a ruptured bag of Paperbestos No. 5 as a seat.

Dumping operations also were producing large clouds of dust. We found a fair sprinkling of dust on our car after leaving it in the lot most of the day. Both the cameraman and I had dust on our clothes, equipment and our hair at day's end.

It should be noted that we visited the operations after they had been closed down for one week for maintenance and repair, and we were at the bagging operation right after they had been shut down for a two-hour weekly cleanup, yet still had to order additional cleaning. And brooms still seem to be a preferred method of dust control by many operators.

The last time I visited Jeffrey was about two years ago, when I first joined J-M. I cannot remember conditions as poor as the ones I saw on this trip. Since the baghouses were funtioning well, I can only think that most of the problems I saw were the result of poor.housekeeping and lax employee training in material handling.

I would be happy to discuss my observations further at your convenience.

