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INTER ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATION

Raybestos Manhattan

NORTH CHARLESTON DIVISION and NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. LOCATION

TO: Mr. John Marsh

DATE: March 6, 1974

SUBJECT: McGill Study of Asbestos Safety Garments

I have studied the "Asbestos Fiber Release From Safety Garments" report by Dr. G. W. Gibbs of McGill University which was received along with your letter of March 1, 1974. A report of this type must be carefully critiqued to be of value. I would be remiss if I did not advise that overall the research was poorly done, and I am disappointed in what the report is in comparison to what it could have been.

(1) British Procedure Used:

For sampling and counting the NIOSH procedure should have been used. Several differences may introduce new variables. NIOSH thinks that their procedure is superior, particularly dissolving the membrane.

(2) Unidentified Fabrics:

Of the 45 tests conducted 29 were on unknown materials. R/M material was compared against unknown products. It would have been very easy to identify these products to the extent of knowing the weight, finish, etc. They were identified as uncoated. Some coatings are difficult to distinguish, and I question in plant 1 whether the unknown fabrics were treated.

(3) Sampling Technique:

Filter over the coat but under the hood and unobserved (pg. 3). It is important to know how long the filter was under the hood, etc. We do not know the source of the dust, Dr. Gibbs implies it may come from the hood.

(4) R/M Treated Fabric Was Dustier:

R/M L-71-1173 was treated with an adhesive to hold the dust and lint in place. Visually the cloth is very clean. The McGill report indicates it to be about twice as dusty as unknown uncoated fabric. I question this, could samples be crossed up or 1173 not actually used? A serious problem here.

EXHIBIT P-655

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(5) High Counts At Plant 2:

A count of 26.2 from a safety garment sounds unreal. If this count was obtained, the operator is working in a visual cloud of dust. It would take severe abrasion and abuse to obtain a count of 26.2 from a garment.

(6) Miscellaneous Areas:

Table A-1: Calculations are not correct for C_3 in many cases.

Table A-1: Dates of survey are incorrect.

Table A-2: Only one count given.

Table A-2: Footnotes about suits are not related to the rest of the report.

Table 6: > 4 weeks - 112.3 is incorrect.

I do not think that the report is worthy of being published in its present form.

If the dust originates from the hood, I would recommend that R/M offer a more highly coated product for this use. A product of this type could be made available immediately.

I think my comments may be of help to Dr. Gibbs in future work, and I would be glad to discuss them with him on the telephone.

John Hawkins
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