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ASBESTOS TOXICOLOGY

STATUS SUMMARY

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Introduction

Many people have become justifiably uneasy about the toxicological aspects of asbestos and recent federal regulations regarding its use. Unfortunately, the publicity given to this governmental activity has tended to be of a sensational nature and has done little to place the question of asbestos toxicology in logical perspective. We take this opportunity, therefore, to state our firm belief that Union Carbide Corporation can comply with the regulations. Installation of additional dust control equipment at our plant to achieve compliance is substantially complete. Moreover, we believe that our customers can, without undue burden, comply with these regulations as they apply to their operations.

With regard to the toxicity of asbestos, it is important to note that asbestosis and statistical excess occurrences of bronchogenic carcinoma have occurred only in connection with massive long term exposures to asbestos dust. The risk of this type of exposure is usually in asbestos mines and mills and in manufacturing operations such as floor tile plants where asbestos usage may vary from 15,000 to 30,000 tons per year. The risk of long term massive exposure is generally not typical of operations utilizing the specialty type "Calidria" Asbestos products.

The purpose of this short report, therefore, is to provide the "Calidria" Asbestos user and potential user with a reasonable picture of the toxicology situation and a copy of the final OSHA regulations on asbestos usage. Some limited information on handling procedures and control of dust generated by cutting and grinding that may be of particular interest for the small user is also included.

It would be impractical and redundant for us to attempt to interpret, in a short report, the great mass of published matter, scientific and otherwise, that has appeared on both sides of the asbestos question. Instead, a small number of relevant articles have been selected and arranged by subject. It includes:

Toxicology Information

1. Asbestos and Your Health

   Some direct answers to toxicology questions. Published by the Quebec Asbestos Information Service.

2. Airborne Asbestos

   The Summary and Conclusions section of a comprehensive study on asbestos toxicology by the National Academy of Sciences. The key conclusion is that the general public is in no immediate danger from asbestos which is in sharp contract with much of what appears in the popular press. The complete report is available on request.

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3. Response to Article in Wall Street Journal

   When the OSHA regulations were published, the Wall Street Journal chose to attack them in an article that presented a very distorted picture of the facts, typical of much of the newspaper coverage of the question. This is the response to the article.

4. Several reprints from recent newspaper articles. Coverage is more objective.

5. The testimony of Dr. Wright before OSHA at the hearings on the proposed regulations.

   This is included for those seriously interested in the background of the toxicology questions.

OSHA Regulations

1. Report Series on OSHA - June 26, 1972

   Industry comment on the regulations and a brief summary of the main features.

2. Safety and Health Reporter - July 17, 1972

   Plans and progress on regulations similar to asbestos on other substances.

3. OSHA Regulations on Asbestos

4. "Calidria" Asbestos Material Safety Data Sheet

Dust Control

1. Transfer Devices

   Two apparatus arrangements developed by Dow Chemical to transfer their light Saran Microballoons. Similar devices have been successful for several small "Calidria" Asbestos users.

2. Vacuum Grinding Equipment

   In some applications plastics containing asbestos are abraided. Small amounts of fiber may be released. Here is one convient way to control the dust.

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