REPORT OF CALL

cc for Permutit File

Calidria ASBESTOS

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UNION CARBIDE CORPORATION
P.O. Box 579 Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14302

By H. B. Rhodes

Date 5/16/75

Full Name Texas-Eastman Address Longview, TX Mfrs. of	Interviewed Mr. Ron Spillers, General Supervisor, Utilities Mr. Mike Chaffin, Staff Engineer Mr. John Rutherford, Process Design

OBJECTIVE

1. Ascertain the scope of the asbestos toxicology problem at this location and deal with it.

2. Get Permutit off dead center on the introduction of their process improvements on the flotation unit.

BACKGROUND

This is a very large petrochemical and plastics facility with emphasis on polyolefins. All of their water and waste treatment equipment appears to be supplied by Permutit who have excellent rapport. The account was developed by Harold Bourgois who is now the regional manager in Baton Rouge. It is handled by Clint Gosse, the Permutit sales representative in Houston. Mr. Gosse attended the meeting and was very cordial and helpful. Mr. Bourgois had a prior commitment and sent his apologies. There was no hint of any resentment that I had gone directly to Ron Spillers to set up the meeting and then invited them.

Over the past year we have been getting reports via Permutit that the flotation unit using asbestos had been experiencing severe technical problems and that toxicology problem had caused them to largely stop using asbestos. We have tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to get in to talk to the account.

OBSERVATIONS

When we arrived Mr. Spillers was in a sudden emergency meeting and after some delay he sent Mike Chaffin to stand in. He came in later for a few minutes and I was able to hit the high spots on the health story. Mr. Rutherford joined us briefly at the end.



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We first explored the nature of the problem about a year ago. Mr. Bill Dulweber, the Superintendent of the Power Department which operates the unit recommended that since asbestos was a hazardous material that it would be appropriate for them to look for a substitute with equivalent cost performance. This was not a panic and has been looked into fairly extensively on a medium priority basis. They have not found anything that looks good so far and both of the engineers seem to be highly impressed with the performance of asbestos in the application. (Mr. Spillers noted later that they did find and are using a substitute in another application). The research efforts along these lines will continue.

They have, however, continued to use asbestos and as the recent order indicates plan to continue with it for the present. The rate is about 3 bags every two days. The men handling it wear masks and have had physical examinations. Their industrial hygiene people have checked the dust level so I did not make a count. Unfortunately their plant industrial hygienist, Don Pringle was unavailable. Overall it is clear that there is no panic or edict regarding asbestos.

I went over the asbestos and health story pretty much along the lines presented in the recent AIA/NA booklet. Left a copy of this and "What Everyone Should Know About Asbestos" booklet. They were appreciative and were urged to call me if anyone had any further questions.

I also went into the technical process improvements made by Permutit in broad general terms. This was done with Mr. Gosse's blessing since neither he nor Mr. Bourgois were aware of them. Mr. Chaffin expressed great interest in receiving the details which were promised. It is most appropriate since their entire waste and water treating processing is under review at this time.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Unfortunately, Mr. Dulweber the plant superintendent and originator of the replacement question was on vacation so we may not have gotten to the nitty-gritty. It was also obvious that Permutit has made no effort to push the process improvement.

HBR

I will call Larry Baron immediately to outline the situation and push to get the new technology introduced. This should be no problem since Gosse has promised to supply it and I got the impression that promises to Texas-Eastman are kept very promptly by Permutit. Will also track regularly with Gosse who seems like an intelligent go-getter. (Baron contact made 5/19/75).

ADDED CONFIDENTIAL NOTE

The sale of the Permutit Division seems to have collapsed recently. Permutit had a good year in 1974 so Sybron raised the price considerably over the original figure discussed. They are also insisting on spot cash. This has scared off all of the serious prospects.

Typed 5/19/75
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