REPORT OF CALL

Calidria asbestos

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cc for J. L. Myers
W. C. Thurber
File

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

By E. J. Kleber

Date 9-24-74

Full Name Shell Oil various locations near Address Traverse City, MI Mfrs. of	Interviewed Bob Jones - Regional Industrial Hygienist Claude Osborn - Safety Director, Mich. Drilling Larry Kinney - Kinco Inc. (Montello agent)

OBJECTIVES

Conduct air sampling tests at drilling rigs during the addition of NGSV to muds.

OBSERVATIONS

Air samples were collected at 3 Shell Oil drilling sites and the results will be reported in the next couple of weeks. This report deals with discussions on Shell's policies and observations regarding asbestos.

First, some background on Mr. Jones. He is a certified industrial hygienist (certified hygenists are the "royalty" of their profession) who has experience in most areas of industrial hygiene. He toiled for many years in Kentucky as a state hygenist, where he had a tiff with, of all people, Dr. Selikoff over something in the Kentucky coal mines. It would be fair to say that Mr. Jones has a very low opinion of the good doctor. He agrees that the asbestos and health question has been blown way out of proportion, but he intends to see that rules laid down in the health and safety area are adhered to. In short, he sympathizes with our plight and will put in a good word only if the tests prove to be within the acceptable limits.

Mr. Jones made some comments during the day that are worth while noting:

1. At the warehouse - the first thing we did upon arrival was inspect the pallets. Incidentally, from a distance, the pallets appear to be quite neat, sitting as they were in a corner of the warehouse. Up close however the picture changes. In almost every bag there was approximately 1-4 tablespoons of the mini-pellets laying in the sleeve. As soon as the bags are handled, the pellets dribble out to the floor. He also noted that a thin layer of dust was present on every bag and as soon as the bag was moved some of it became airborne. This layer of dust problem became even more evident when one of the men loading the bags held the bag against his chest while waiting for an opportunity to set it down. When the bag was put down the mans shirt was covered with white dust. Mr. Jones commented that every time the man moved or touched his shirt he certainly was releasing asbestos fiber in the air near his breathing zone.

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It can be safely assumed that this white dust is asbestos, since our products are the only material presently in the warehouse. They were put there directly from one of our rail cars. Air samples were taken during the warehouse operation.

2. At the drilling sites - to make a long story short the handling of our products by the "Roughnecks" (honest, that's what the laborers are called) is nothing short of atrocious. Bag opening on two of the three rigs was accomplished by punching the bags with a chisel until the weight of the pellets on the inside of the bag causes the bag to break the rest of the way and in 10 seconds 50 pounds are sitting in the hopper. Bag disposal is non-existant unless a stiff wind begins blowing them about. Then they will pick the bags up and toss them in a pit dug in the ground for trash disposal. Otherwise they'll sit on the ground next to the hopper until shift clean-up.

3. Political aspects - there is an unusual relationship in the oil fields that needs some explaining. An oil company does not own the drilling rigs. The rigs are hired on a contract basis and sometimes communication between the oil company and the rig company is not very good.

Shell feels responsible for on-the-job safety and apparently any OSHA citations and/or fines become Shell's responsibility. One of the major problems Shell has is the education of these employees who are not working directly for them. The handling of asbestos is a prime example. According to Claude Osborne they have been told time and time again to excerise care when handling these products. This approach does not seem to be wokking.

The biggest stumbling block of all is medical exams. Although Shell does have a comprehensive medical program, they are not about to pay for X-rays of thousands of people who do not work for them. It all boils down to the kind of numbers we get from these tests. If Shell feels they don't have to pay for exams we have a chance. If, however, medical exams are indicated, I suspect they will forbid the use of New Granular Super Visbestos.

There is one more factor of note. The industrial hygienists in the oil industry seem to have excellent communications with one another. It would, therefore not be suprising to find one company make a decision and others follow the lead.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

EJK Report results of fiber counts to Montello as soon as possible and stay in touch with Bob Jones on the outcome of their counts.

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mlv

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ACL Doc 17098 · Page 2 of 2 asbestosclaims.law/library/17098/2