October [illegible], 1972

TO: #247, E. H. Rosse
#961, D. E. Shipley
#971, T. F. MacLennan
#981, J. T. Tucker
#991, D. S. Alderfer

FROM: #147-2, C. M. Howard, Jr.

RECEIVED OCT [illegible] 1972

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT
UC-5454

SUBJECT: STATUS OF ASBESTOS FREE JOINT COMPOUND.

As you know, Research has been working toward an asbestos free joint compound for some time. Asbestos is used in all joint compounds. It is vital in controlling consistency; is necessary in adding slip and crack resistance. Prior to asbestos being classified as a health pollutant a few years ago, it is believed that various attempts were made toward possible substitutions. These efforts apparently always ended with considered opinions that this fiber was virtually irreplaceable in joint compounds.

Our Research Section has been working toward an asbestos free joint compound for the past 18 months or so. Two main reasons:

1.) Stay in business under increasingly stringent government standards and rising environmental concerns.

2.) Avoid a competitive breakthrough.

Some 60 days ago, a Management committee was formed and it was agreed that elimination of asbestos needed top Research priority. For several reasons, powder formulas were given the main thrust. In terms of manning, Research efforts were intensified. Last week successful tests were reportedly made by Research on a production batch of asbestos free USG Joint Compound - Topping. Tomorrow the results will be demonstrated to Product Management. Once a topping is proven, it is felt that securing an all purpose and taping will come fairly easy.

Assuming success in the demonstration, C.C.P.D. has tentatively scheduled a field test in the Chicago area by the end of this week. With this experience behind us, and with your cooperation, we will move rapidly into plant/field tests in each C.P.D.

At this point, it might be felt that this letter could have waited to include tomorrow's demonstration results. However, we learned yesterday some information which, doesn't surprise us, but could pose serious ramifications for our business. National Gypsum Co. reputedly is releasing an ecology formula joint compound (asbestos free) from their "Matteson, Ill., Westwego, La., and Baltimore, Md." plants. Rotan, Texas and Long Beach, Calif. as well as Clarence Center, New York were not indicated. However, any meaningful technology can obviously and totally be applied. We need your cooperation, as quickly as possible, on helping us to verify this information, and, if true, to evaluate their state of

UNITED STATES GYPSUM COMPANY

GP028 1518

Union Carbide trial exhibit UC-5454: C. M. Howard, Jr. to Distribution on Status of Asbestos-Free Joint Compound a... Published by AsbestosClaims.Law
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the art. Therefore, please - -

1.) Determine, if true, what types of joint compounds are being introduced - - e.g. drying powder, hardening powder, ready mixed - taping, topping, all purpose ... perhaps texture powders.

2.) Evaluate the trade's acceptance and,

3.) Secure and ship an unopened container of each to Earl Maynard air express.

I M P O R T A N T

THIS NEEDS EMPHASIZING ONCE AGAIN. WHETHER NATIONAL GYPSUM CO. HAS IT OR NOT, THE ASBESTOS - FREE PROJECT SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED, NOR THE WORDS "ASBESTOS FREE" BE USED, IN COMMUNICATING OUTSIDE OF THE DISTRIBUTION LISTING OF THIS LETTER. YOUR CO-OPERATION IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL HERE!

CMH:n

cc: #132-1, J. J. McLaughlin
#147-1, C. C. Gramer
#147-2, R. P. Entz
#149, J. T. Allen
#151, K. S. Freeman
#151, E. Maynard
#157, S. T. Hadley
#157, D. M. Schmidt
#170-1, W. W. Holloway
#170-5, J. R. Milstead
#247, G. R. Frankling
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