

Johnson & Johnson

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R. L. SONDBERG

New Brunswick, N.J.

February 6, 1973

Subject: Talc Definition Meeting
R. T. Vanderbilt Company
230 Park Avenue
February 5, 1973

Dr. W. Nashed

You and I audited the above meeting which aimed to define talc for ASTM purposes. Vanderbilt Co. was the host of that meeting and they called it to coincide with their Talc Manufacturers Association caucus to talk about asbestos. We are not a member of that Association but I am on the talc Committee for the ASTM.

(1) The group agreed to restrict the effort to defining Industrial Talc only. The definition agreed to is roughly this:

Industrial Talc is a product varying in mineral composition from something approaching the theoretical mineral talc $Mg_6(Si_8O_{20})(OH)_4$ to mixtures of mineral talc and naturally occurring associate non-fibrous and/or fibrous minerals as defined by ASTM D2946-71.

The D2946-71 defines a fibrous mineral as having a ratio of length to width of at least ten to one. It was decided also not to define theoretical mineral talc or Pharmaceutical grade talc. The expectation is that the above Industrial talc definition will be put into the ASTM machinery without delay so it issues officially at their general meeting in June.

(2) Dr. W. E. Smith of the Health Research Institute of Fairleigh Dickinson University submitted a written report updating his earlier studies on a variety of asbestos minerals and tremolitic talc on hamsters. Copy attached.

(3) Various uncomfortable aspects of Talc (fibrous) defined by ACGIH 1971, were discussed. No definite course of action emerged although Johns Manville indicated they will look into approaching an official of the ACGIH.

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Vanderbilt Company thinks they might approach members of the Congress through the senators of New York and California. The idea is to try to get Talc (fibrous) expunged and its connoted equivalence to tremolite removed on the basis that the claimed hazard is invalid. Copy attached.

(4) Other information: Baker Talc Co., Eastern Townships, Quebec, is for sale. Cyprus Mines almost bought it. International Talc Co., Gouverneur New York is for sale. The word is that the asking price is 6 million and that they would take half that. It is full of tremolite.

United Sierra capitalized on the asbestos controversy by currently advertising that the way out of present talc problems is to use their talc which they claim is devoid of asbestos minerals.

(5) These organizations were present at the above meeting:

Vanderbilt Company
Engelhard Minerals
Whitaker, Clark & Daniels
International Talc Company
Cyprus Mines
Johns Manville - Desert Minerals
American Talc Company
Johnson & Johnson

W. H. Ashton

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cc: Dr. A. Goudie
Dr. G. Hildick-Smith to Dr. G. Lord
Mr. R. J. Mortimer
Dr. D. Petterson
Dr. T. H. Shelley to Dr. R. A. Fuller to Talc File
→ Dr. R. L. Sundberg to File #0503

Attachments

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