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OD, DSR, NIOSH

December 23, 1987

Mr. John Moran
Director, Division of Safety Research
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Research
944 Chestnut Ridge Road
Morgantown, WV 26505

Dear Mr. Moran:

This letter has reference to the NIOSH proposed regulation for respirator certification (42-CFR, Part 84, federal register of August 27, 1987.) We are compelled to express our concern and opposition to this proposal "as is".

I will attempt to generalize some of the specific aspects that we are opposed to and make some comment accordingly.

I) Current use of 3M8710 and Modex 2200. Within our cottonseed crushing plant and cotton warehouses we have voluntarily made available maintenance free and disposable units for cottondust exposure and we understand that the technical aspect of this proposal would preclude the 3M8710 from NIOSH approval and/or certification. These respirators have successfully protected our employees in the past and we can think of no real necessity to change. Furthermore, the technical aspect would significantly change the construction and costs of the units. We presently purchase approximately 200 cases per year at cost ranging from 50¢ to \$1.00 per mask. This totals \$24,000 to \$48,000 per year. We are told that the cost of the new units may double and such an increase would place a financial burden on us and our industry, therefore, there must be established a real need for such a conversion.

In addition, our experience tells us that the employees would reject wearing units that are heavier, hotter, and harder to breathe through. Our concern regarding the employees wearing respirators deals more with the possible aggravation of allergies totally unrelated to the dust exposure within our environment. We know of no serious medical hazard and/or impairment directly caused by our environmental dust.

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II) NIOSH has failed to develop protocol and detail concerning testing, it is impossible to evaluate and make comment on the feasibility of the proposed protocols. NIOSH should develop the protocol for industrial workplace testing to afford parties affected the opportunity to comment. A rulemaking procedure should be conducted to allow due process of law. Such a proceeding will compliment NIOSH efforts by affording comments regarding feasibility, cost, and validity of requirements before they go into effect.

We respectfully request NIOSH to recall the proposal currently pending and initiate a rulemaking to develop the protocol and detail relative to workplace testing for certification.

Sincerely,



Donald L. Beyette
Corporate Safety Director

DLB/bs