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HW-15284

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December 5, 1949

REDUCTION OF OXIDES OF NITROGEN EXPOSURES
AT PICKLING OPERATION, 313 BUILDING, 300 AREA

In February 1949 a study was made of the slug pickling operation in 313 Building to determine the extent of the operator's exposures to oxides of nitrogen. The results of this investigation, as reported in document HW-12,708, indicated that excessive concentrations existed in the workroom atmosphere. It was found that concentrations approaching 400 ppm were possible in the operator's breathing zone. This was considerably in excess of the MAC* of 25 ppm for oxides of nitrogen.

As a result of these findings recommendations were made proposing methods of modifying the existing exhaust ventilation system at the pickling and wash tanks in order that more effective control could be realized from these facilities. These changes were made with an apparent improvement in the control of fumes liberated from this process. A recheck of the atmospheric conditions was felt advisable, consequently, a study was made on November 2, 1949, to determine what effect these corrections had made.

The findings of the recent air tests show that the oxides of nitrogen are at present being more effectively controlled with a subsequent reduction of the fumes in the workroom atmosphere. The average exposure was found to be approximately 12 ppm while the highest concentration encountered in the worker's breathing zone during normal pickling operation was 18 ppm. It is felt that the corrective steps which have been taken to improve the control measures at this operation have produced a more healthful working environment for the workers involved.

* MAC - Maximum Allowable Concentration

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Frank E. Adley

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