

STATE OF MAINE

# DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

JOHN R. MCKERNAN, JR.  
GOVERNOR

DEAN C. MARRIOTT  
COMMISSIONER

DEBRAH RICHARD  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

March 4, 1994

Center for Disease Control  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health  
Robert A. Taft Laboratories  
4676 Columbia Parkway  
Cincinnati, OH 45226-1998

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing in response to your letter of January 20, 1994, concerning the potential of workers working with hazardous chemicals carrying chemical contamination home with them on their clothes or body.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection does not have any records or data bases that track this type of information. Our spill response group does have limited antidotal information, but this is neither consistent or wholly reliable. Two other state agencies may be of better help to you. The first is the Maine Department of Human Services which would track health problems within the state. Its address is Department of Human Services, Station 11 State House, Augusta, Maine 04333. The second is the Bureau of Labor Standards of the Maine Department of Labor which would track injuries to workers that result from occupational exposure. Its Address is Bureau of Labor Standards, Station 45 State House, Augusta, Maine 04333.

Our own emergency response team that responds to oil and hazardous chemical incidents within this state has procedures which are responders are trained in that are designed to prevent response activities from spreading contamination from incidents back to the office or to responder's homes.

Each regional office has established decontamination areas which include laundry centers so that equipment and clothing can be laundered at work, not at home with the family laundry. During large spills it is also a practice to contract with a commercial cleaner for decontamination of clothing and equipment. This commercial cleaner is informed of the nature of the material being cleaned. Field decontamination procedures differ from site to site and incident to incident. In each instance the potential for contamination of personnel and equipment and the nature of the chemical hazard present is evaluated and procedures are used that take this potential and regional resources and conditions into consideration. Due to weather conditions during the winter months a heavy reliance is placed on dry decontamination which involves heavy use of disposable personal protective equipment and on site bagging of other equipment for later decontamination at the regional office centers.

AUGUSTA  
STATE HOUSE STATION 17  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017  
(207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826  
OFFICE LOCATED AT: RAY BUILDING, HOSPITAL STREET

PORTLAND  
312 CANCO ROAD  
PORTLAND, ME 04103  
(207) 879-6300 FAX: (207) 879-6303

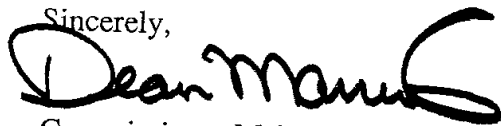
BANGOR  
106 HOGAN ROAD  
BANGOR, ME 04401  
(207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584

PRESQUE ISLE  
1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK  
PRESQUE ISLE, ME 04769  
(207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 764-1507

All personnel in the hazardous chemical response, site inspection, and site mitigation programs are in a health monitoring program. In the 14 years this program has been in place, there have not been any observed health effects that can be directly related to any chemical exposure. We have had a number of incidents where repeat testing has been required. The repeat tests have indicated that levels in question have returned to normal ranges. Though these questionable results may be the result of staff having chemical exposure, to date it is more probable that these results were the result of testing errors. No other quality control testing is done.

If you wish further information concerning the activities of the Response unit contact David Sait, Response Services Division Director, or Fred Brann, Bureau of Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste Control Health, Safety, and Training Coordinator at the address above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dean Mank". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Commissioner Maine Department of Environmental Protection.