

BRUSHWELLMAN

ENGINEERED MATERIALS

Brush Wellman Inc./17876 St. Clair Ave./Cleveland, Ohio 44110

NEWS

Docket H-005C

Ex. 2-3

ABC LOOK AT BERYLLIUM INDUSTRY "SIMPLISTIC," BRUSH WELLMAN SAYS

Cleveland, April 20, 2000 – A broadcast April 19 by ABC 20/20 focusing on the beryllium industry and associated health issues is inaccurate and unfair, according to Brush Wellman, the world's leading producer of beryllium and beryllium products.

Gordon D. Harnett, president, chairman and chief executive officer of Brush Wellman, said the company was particularly concerned with several aspects of the broadcast. "It is because we share concern about the risks of chronic beryllium disease that we have invested more than \$350 million at our Elmore plant alone to reduce those risks. ABC basically ignored our 50-year effort to better understand all forms of CBD and to eradicate it once and for all."

The facts are these:

- Beryllium dust does not pose a health threat to large numbers of people as ABC suggested. Beryllium is safe in solid form, the form in which the general public handles it – in products such as air bag sensors, automotive ignition control systems, computers and cell phones.
- Brush Wellman has always informed employees and customers about known health hazards of working with beryllium dust. Much of what is known today about this disease is because of the investment Brush Wellman has made in research and its willingness to share the results of that with regulatory bodies, customers and health officials.
- The federal government and Brush Wellman have worked jointly to assure a continued supply of beryllium for defense systems, but never knowingly put workers at risk. Brush Wellman has worked for more than five decades to lead the way to protecting the health of all workers, while also fulfilling its vital role in national defense.

"If Brush Wellman operated with the callous disregard for employees and customers that ABC implies, we would be out of business and in fact should be," Harnett said. "Everyone at Brush Wellman cares about the people who have become ill. No one would stand for the type of behavior that show suggested. And I wouldn't work for a company that operated that way."

“ABC had the opportunity to help increase understanding for these very complex issues. Instead, it took a simplistic approach that did nothing more than perpetuate misinformation, promote outdated science and create needless anxiety.”

Detailed information about chronic beryllium disease and the company’s record of working to combat CBD can be found on a special website – **www.befacts.com**.

Despite the information Brush Wellman provided to ABC, and the time Brush people spent talking with various individuals on staff there, the viewer is left with the distinct impression that Brush purposely put workers at risk. Brush Wellman’s vice president of occupational medicine, Dr. David Deubner, participated in a 70-minute interview with Charles Gibson to provide background on the company’s work in this area. Only 74 seconds of that interview aired. The complete interview can be viewed on www.befacts.com.

CBD remains an extremely complex disease even though scientists have been studying it for decades. How CBD develops is not yet fully understood. New ways to detect the presence of CBD before symptoms occur have only recently been developed. Even newer techniques for detecting susceptibility to beryllium and CBD are just beginning to be used in the workplace. Thanks to these new and improved diagnostic techniques, early forms of CBD may never develop into full-blown disease. ABC has done an enormous disservice by creating the impression that the number of cases is growing and likely to increase. The fact is that improved medical monitoring is detecting beryllium sensitivity at earlier stages.

Scientists continue to debate the safe workplace standard for beryllium exposure, Brush Wellman data – which the company has openly shared with the government and other interested parties – suggest that the chemical form of airborne beryllium, along with particle size and number, are key to controlling CBD. The company is working aggressively with the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health to develop more data in this area. Brush continues to monitor the workplace to understand how different exposures can affect the possibility of contracting CBD and is putting new practices in place as soon as new information is learned in order to reduce that risk even further.

Beryllium saves lives everyday in many vital applications including air bag sensors, fire extinguisher sprinkler heads, x-ray windows for mammography, medical laser bores and pacemakers. It is also essential in landing-gear bearings, weather forecasting satellites, automotive ignition control systems, computers, wireless communications and oil exploration equipment. Beryllium is also used in a number of military applications including advanced electro-optical targeting and infrared countermeasures, advanced missile systems and radar systems, and surveillance satellites.