My name is John Q Sailor and I was in the U.S. Navy from February 1, 1967 to January 31, 1971. I was a Boatswains Mate and I achieved that rank of BM2. I worked as a boatswains mate aboard ships during my duty with the U. S. Navy. I was diagnosed with asbestosis interstitial pulmonary fibrosis by Dr. Goodlung at Hometown, US Pulmonary Associates in January 2020 and am undergoing pulmonary treatment for my lung disease.

Military Exposure to Asbestos:

1967-1971 U.S. Navy Boatswains Mate

I went to boot camp and completed my initial training in San Diego, CA. After completing my training I was assigned to the USS Neverdock (CV-1)

As a BM, I was responsible for preventative and corrective maintenance of the ships equipment and supervising the repair crews which would take me into every compartment of the ship, where I had to crawl over and around the many steam pipes that had asbestos pads surrounding them. Many of these asbestos wraps were frayed and worn, and would produce asbestos dust when the maintenance was taken place. You could see the snow like particles in the air. No breathing protection or any other protective gear or clothing was supplied while I did this work.

At least weekly, the ship held field days to clean the berthing area. One of the many techniques used was to use a 100# air line equipped with a nozzle to blow clean all horizontal surfaces free of dust and debris. This dust was left over due to maintenance of equipment as it was spread throughout the compartment from the ventilation system. No breathing protection or any other protective gear or clothing was supplied while I did this work. All steam pipes had asbestos lagging on them. However, there were broken spots in the lagging and the asbestos was exposed. When any of the ships were dry docked this extended upkeep lasted 3 months. During that time, shipyard personnel had removed asbestos lagging from many of the piping systems and auxiliary valves for repair. This process generated a large amount of asbestos dust, which covered all horizontal surfaces in the space in which the work occurred. I was still living onboard the ship the entire time this work was occurring.

My duties while on watch required me to be in these spaces during the asbestos lagging replacement. Also, I was required to stand fire watch during any hot-work (e.g. grinding, welding, and/or torch work) that the shipyard was performing. This usually entailed the shipyard worker first removing the asbestos lagging off of any pipe or valve and they were to be working on and they routinely used asbestos blankets to protect any nearby equipment. I stood at approximately 25 fire watches during this shipyard period, ranging in duration from 30 minutes to up to 4 hours. It was typical that I would have to dust off my clothing after these watches because I would have so much asbestos dust accumulated on them either from the air or from the dust that was present on the surfaces that I was sitting on. Also during dry dock periods, turbines and main engines were opened for inspection. Along with the turbine inspection, pumps (with asbestos wrapping) were opened for inspection and repair of gaskets and/or oil seals. I was exposed because of the removal of the asbestos coverings from the steam valves, water pumps, fuel oil pumps, and ventilation blowers.

During my service in the Navy, I was never informed about the dangers of asbestos, and no breathing protection or any other protective gear or clothing was supplied.

My military records during my service in the Navy will not show any asbestos-related diseases due to the long latency period. This is consistent with M21-1, Part VIII, Subpart iii, Chapter 7, Section A - General Information on Claims Based on Exposure to Asbestos, “Many people with asbestos-related diseases have only recently come to medical attention because the latent period for development of disease due to exposure to asbestos ranges from 10 to 45 or more years between first exposure and development of disease.”

Civilian Career:

As a civilian, I worked as a High School teacher and Football coach and did not come in contact with asbestos to my knowledge.

Summary:

I was diagnosed with asbestosis interstitial pulmonary fibrosis by Dr. Goodlung at Hometown, US Pulmonary Associates in January 2020 and am undergoing pulmonary treatment for my lung disease.

My diagnosis is consistent with the latency period of my first exposure in the Navy in 1967. As a result of the heavy exposure to asbestos that I had in the Navy, I believe that a significant of my exposure occurred on active duty, and therefore my asbestosis interstitial pulmonary fibrosis is a service related condition.

I CERTIFY THAT the statements on this form are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sincerely,

John Q Sailor