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Owens-Corning To Study 'Beta' For Space Project

By STN Correspondent

WASHINGTON – U.S. Representative Thomas Ludlow Ashley has announced that the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center has awarded a $97,000 contract to Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation, Toledo, Ohio, to study how Beta fibers, a non-combustible fabric, can be used most effectively for Apollo spacecraft and crew systems equipment.

Under the terms of the cost-plus-fixed-fee contract, Owens-Corning will provide all the necessary resources to perform the research, development, design, fabrication, testing, applications and consultation for incorporating Beta fibers into spacecraft and crew equipment use.

Owens-Corning is the developer of the Beta fiber, an inorganic substance which neither supports combustion nor produces toxic fumes.

Fiberglas Beta yarns, developed by Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation, Toledo, Ohio, are said to be completely non-combustible, even in all-oxygen atmospheres. They will not even melt until temperatures of 1,350-1,500 degrees.

John H. Thomas, Owens-Corning vice president for research and development, said the company has already developed much of the basic engineering criteria needed for producing many of the textile structures required for the Apollo program.

Fire—Safe

Firemen protected by "proximity" suit of Fiberglas Beta fabrics moves in close to extinguish a blaze. These suits protect rescue workers in and near heat up to 1,600 degrees.

Racedrivers were among the first to recognize the fire-safety properties of Fiberglas Beta fabrics. They use Fiberglass Beta coveralls as protective garments against flash fires from volatile racing fuels.

Beta Yarns Have Consumer Uses

TOLEDO, Ohio – Fiberglas Beta yarns are now being woven into a variety of high quality consume products such as draperies, curtains, bedspreads, tablecloths, and mattress ticking.

Fabrics woven of Fiberglas Beta yarn have a softness of hand, draping quality and long wear never before possible with other glass fibers.

And the end product retains the unique benefits of all Fiberglas textiles: fire safe, wrinkle-free and resistant to staining, shrinking and fading, the company says.

As a fire-protection fabric, Fiberglas Beta is used in fire-fighting clothing.