

Fluorine Elimination To Cost Geneva \$2,250,000 For First Two Phases

First official estimates on what it is costing Geneva Steel to lick the fluorine problem were made public Saturday—a staggering \$2,250,000 for just the research and corrective equipment on the first two phases of the project—with a third and final phase still to come. The announcement came in an official statement from L. J. Westhaver, vice president and manager of Utah operations, Columbia-Geneva Steel Division, United States Steel Corporation. In the

same statement he revealed that one phase of the three-phase corrective measure is now accomplished, contract for a second phase has been signed, and a "third and final phase of the corrective program will be started early in 1954, which the Division believes will eliminate the problem of fluoride discharges in Utah Valley in the future."

The equipment for the three phases of correcting the problem, a plant spokesman said, is located in the slanting plant for the first two phases, and will be in the open hearths for the third phase.

Mr. Westhaver's statement follows in full:

"In March of 1952 Columbia-Geneva Steel Division announced its intention to begin immediately the installation of corrective equipment at Geneva Works which finally would eliminate fluorine discharges. Late in the spring of 1952 the first phase of the corrective program was completed after extensive and time-consuming engineering research on a problem which was entirely new to the steel industry.

"A contract has now been signed with The Research Corporation of New York City—one of the outstanding research institutions in the field of air pollution in the United States—to install additional corrective equipment at Geneva. This equipment will further reduce substantially the discharge of fluorides.

"The engineering research and equipment for the first two phases of the program have cost Columbia-Geneva Steel Division in excess of \$2,250,000.

"The third and final phase of the corrective program will be started early in 1954, which the Division believes will eliminate the problem of fluoride discharges in Utah Valley in the future."

Farmers in the vicinity of the Geneva plant have, for a considerable period, claimed damage to their livestock which has been traced to excess fluorine in the animal's diet. Crop damage from too much fluorine has also been claimed.

Mr. Westhaver's statement noted that the problem encountered here "was entirely new to the steel industry." In a previous statement he attributed the cause to certain properties in Utah raw materials used in the steel industry here, properties which apparently are not found in similar raw materials elsewhere.