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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Food and Drug Administration
Washington, DC 20204

January 13, 2000

Don Bucholz, Ph.D.
Conforma Clad Inc.
501 Park East Blvd.
New Albany, IN 47150

Dear Dr. Bucholz:

This responds to your inquiry requesting an opinion on the acceptability of two tungsten carbide formulations that will be used as wear resistant coatings on food processing equipment such as extruder barrels and screws. You state that in your coating process, a mixture of tungsten carbide and braze filler metal is applied to the substrate and heated to the point in which the filler metal melts and bonds to the surface being coated. The molten filler metal forms a metallurgical bond with the substrate to anchor the wear resistant tungsten carbide.

In the past, the agency has said that particular tungsten carbide formulations, which are of similar composition to your tungsten carbides, are acceptable for repeat use food-contact applications. We have no reason to change that opinion at this time. Therefore, the use of your tungsten carbide coatings on extrusion barrels and screws intended to contact food is acceptable.

If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Andrew J. Zajac
Division of Petition Control, HFS-215
Office of Premarket Approval
Center for Food Safety
and Applied Nutrition