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HEADLINE: New cancer case sparks suit against Amoco

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BODY:

The brain cancer cluster at Amoco Corp.'s Naperville campus incited its first litigation Thursday.

The action, however, does not emanate from any of the 16 current and former Amoco Research Center employees who have developed various brain tumors over the last 16 years.

A lawyer representing a former employee who survived a bout of thyroid cancer 10 years after he left the company has filed the legal action in Cook County Chancery Court. It does not seek damages, but could be a precursor to further liability lawsuits, said Grant Dixon, the attorney. Essentially Samuel Ginsberg, 61 of Ooltewah, Tenn., wants to know if any other research center employees have developed illnesses similar to his.

Ginsberg, who worked as a human resources executive in Building 503 at Amoco's Naperville campus from 1970 to 1972, suffered a rare form of cancer known as multifocal papillary carcinoma and had his thyroid removed in 1982.

Amoco said it has and will continue to share everything it can about the Naperville illnesses, which public health officials have called a cancer cluster.

"They're looking for information and they're looking for answers," said Vicki Kastory, Amoco spokesman. "We'll do everything we can to help them find any answers."

Amoco closed part of Building 503 in August 1996 and launched a search for the causes of a rash of malignant and benign brain tumors among current and former employees there. That study has yet to turn up any cases of thyroid cancer or any other pattern of suspicious illnesses besides the brain cancers, Kastory said.

Ginsberg did not seek legal advice until after he received a newspaper article on the Amoco cancer cluster and a health questionnaire from Amoco's brain tumor task force, which is

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surveying everyone who has ever worked in the 500 complex that includes Building 503.

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