

Item 1A. Risk Factors.

The following is a description of what we consider the key challenges and risks confronting our business. This discussion should be considered in conjunction with the discussion under the caption “Forward-Looking Information” preceding Part I, the information set forth under Item 1, “Business” and with the discussion of the business included in Part II, Item 7, “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.” These risks comprise the material risks of which we are aware. If any of the events or developments described below or elsewhere in this Annual Report on Form 10-K, or in any documents that we subsequently file publicly were to occur, it could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition or results of operations.

Risks Relating to Our Business

We are subject to numerous lawsuits for asbestos-related personal injury, and costs associated with these lawsuits may adversely affect our results of operations, cash flow and financial position.

We are subject to numerous lawsuits for asbestos-related personal injury. Estimation of our ultimate exposure for asbestos-related claims is subject to significant uncertainties, as there are multiple variables that can affect the timing, severity and quantity of claims. Our estimate of the future expense of these claims is derived from assumptions with respect to future claims, settlement and defense costs which are based on experience during the last few years and which may not prove reliable as predictors. A significant upward or downward trend in the number of claims filed, depending on the nature of the alleged injury, the jurisdiction where filed and the quality of the product identification, or a significant upward or downward trend in the costs of defending claims, could change the estimated liability, as would substantial adverse verdicts at trial or on appeal. A legislative solution or a structured settlement transaction could also change the estimated liability. These uncertainties may result in us incurring future charges or increases to income to adjust the carrying value of recorded liabilities and assets, particularly if the number of claims and settlements and defense costs escalates or if legislation or another alternative solution is implemented; however, we are currently unable to predict such future events. The resolution of these claims may take many years, and the effect on results of operations, cash flow and financial position in any given period from a revision to these estimates could be material.

As of December 31, 2012, we were one of a number of defendants in cases involving 56,442 pending claims filed in various state and federal courts that allege injury or death as a result of exposure to asbestos. See Note 11, “Commitments and Contingencies” of the Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements for additional information on:

- Our pending claims;
- Our historical settlement and defense costs for asbestos claims;
- The liability we have recorded in our financial statements for pending and reasonably anticipated asbestos claims through 2021;

- The asset we have recorded in our financial statements related to our estimated insurance coverage for asbestos claims; and
- Uncertainties related to our net asbestos liability.

We have recorded a liability for pending and reasonably anticipated asbestos claims through 2021, and while it is probable that this amount will change and that we may incur additional liabilities for asbestos claims after 2021, which additional liabilities may be significant, we cannot reasonably estimate the amount of such additional liabilities at this time.

Macroeconomic fluctuations may harm our business, results of operations and stock price.

Over the past few years, market and economic conditions in the global economy have been highly challenging with slower economic growth and a variety of problems, including turmoil in the credit and financial markets, concerns regarding the stability and viability of major financial institutions, the state of the housing markets and volatility in fuel prices and worldwide stock markets. Restrictions on credit availability have and could continue to adversely affect the ability of our customers to obtain financing for significant purchases and could result in decreases in or cancellation of orders for our products and services as well as impact the ability of our customers to make payments. Similarly, credit restrictions may adversely affect our supplier base and increase the potential for one or more of our suppliers to experience financial distress or bankruptcy. Despite positive economic indicators seen since the beginning of 2011, the overall rate of recovery experienced during 2012 was uneven and uncertainty continues to exist over the stability of the recovery. Contributing factors include persistent high unemployment in the U.S. and Europe, a slow recovery of the U.S. and European housing market, government budget reduction plans, including the potential of mandatory reductions in U.S. defense spending. A return to unfavorable economic conditions, or even an increase in economic uncertainty, could harm our business by adversely affecting our revenues, results of operations, cash flows and financial condition. See “Specific Risks Relating to Our Business Segments”.

Our operations expose us to the risk of environmental liabilities, costs, litigation and violations that could adversely affect our financial condition, results of operations, cash flow and reputation.

Our operations are subject to environmental laws and regulations in the jurisdictions in which they operate, which impose limitations on the discharge of pollutants into the ground, air and water and establish standards for the generation, treatment, use, storage and disposal of solid and hazardous wastes. We must also comply with various health and safety regulations in the United States and abroad in connection with our operations. Failure to comply with any of these laws could result in civil and criminal, monetary and non-monetary penalties and damage to our reputation. In addition, we cannot provide assurance that our costs related to remedial efforts or alleged environmental damage associated with past or current waste disposal practices or other hazardous materials handling practices will not exceed our estimates or adversely affect our financial condition, results of operations and cash flow.