

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

SCHEDULE 13G

Under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

A fee is being paid with this statement.

Name of
Issuer: QUANEX CORP

Title of Class
of Securities: Common Stock

CUSIP Number: 747620102

1) NAME OF I.R.S. IDENTIFICATION NO. OF REPORTING PERSON

The Prudential Insurance Company of America 22-1211670

2.) MEMBER OF A GROUP: (a) N/A

(b) N/A

3) SEC USE ONLY:

4) PLACE OF ORGANIZATION: A mutual insurance company organized
under the laws of the State of New Jersey

NUMBER OF SHARES BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY REPORTING PERSON WITH:

- 5) Sole Voting Power: 252,400 See Exhibit A
6) Shared Voting Power 458,725 See Exhibit A
7) Sole Dispositive Power: 252,400 See Exhibit A
8) Shared Dispositive Power: 458,725 See Exhibit A

9) AGGREGATE AMOUNT BENEFICIALLY OWNED:
711,823.412 See Exhibit A

10) AGGREGATE AMOUNT IN ROW (9) EXCLUDES SHARES: Not Applicable

11) PERCENT OF CLASS REPRESENTED BY AMOUNT IN ROW (9):
5.08 See Exhibit A

12) TYPE OF REPORTING PERSON: IC, IA

ITEM 1(a). NAME OF ISSUER:

QUANEX CORP

ITEM 1(b). ADDRESS OF ISSUER'S EXECUTIVE OFFICES:

QUANEX CORP
1900 W Loop South
Suite 1500
Att: Thomas M. Bewley
Houston, TX 77027

ITEM 2(a). NAME OF PERSON FILING:

The Prudential Insurance Company of America

ITEM 2(b). ADDRESS OF PRINCIPAL BUSINESS OFFICE:

751 Broad Street
Newark, New Jersey 07102-3777

ITEM 2(c). CITIZENSHIP:

A mutual insurance company organized under the laws
of the State of New Jersey

ITEM 2(d). TITLE OF CLASS OF SECURITIES:

Common Stock

ITEM 2(e). CUSIP NUMBER:

747620102

ITEM 3. The Person filing this statement is an Insurance Company
as defined in Section 3(a) (19) of the Securities
Exchange Act of 1934, and an Investment Adviser registered
under Section 203 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940.

ITEM 4. OWNERSHIP:

(a) Number of Shares
Beneficially Owned: 711,823.412 See Exhibit A

(b) Percent of Class: 5.08

(c) Powers

	Number Of Shares
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Sole power to vote or
to direct the vote 252,400 See Exhibit A

Shared power to vote or
to direct the vote 458,725 See Exhibit A

Sole power to dispose or
to direct disposition 252,400 See Exhibit A

Shared power to dispose
or to direct disposition 458,725 See Exhibit A

ITEM 5. OWNERSHIP OF 5% OR LESS OF A CLASS:

Not Applicable

ITEM 6. OWNERSHIP OF MORE THAN 5% ON BEHALF
OF ANOTHER PERSON:

See Exhibit A

ITEM 7. IDENTIFICATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE
SUBSIDIARY WHICH ACQUIRED THE SECURITY BEING
REPORTED ON BY THE ULTIMATE PARENT COMPANY:

Not Applicable

ITEM 8. IDENTIFICATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF MEMBERS
OF THE GROUP:

Not Applicable

ITEM 9. NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF GROUP:

Not Applicable

ITEM 10. CERTIFICATION:

By signing below, the Prudential Insurance Company of America certifies that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, the securities referred to above were acquired in the ordinary course of business and were not acquired for the purpose of and do not have the effect of changing or influencing the control of the issuer of such securities and were not acquired in connection with or as a participant in any transaction having such purpose or effect.

The filing of this statement should not be construed as an admission that Prudential is, for purposes of Sections 13 or 16 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the beneficial owner of such shares.

SIGNATURE

After reasonable inquiry and to the best of its knowledge and belief, The Prudential Insurance Company of America certifies that the information set forth in this statement is true, complete and

correct.

THE PRUDENTIAL INSURANCE COMPANY OF AMERICA

By: Karen L. Shapiro
Vice President, Corporate Compliance

Date: 02/12/98

As of: 12/31/97

Exhibit A

ITEM 6. OWNERSHIP:

The Prudential Insurance Company of America ('Prudential') presently holds 123,300 shares of Issuer's common stock for the benefit of its general account.

In addition, Prudential may have direct or indirect voting and/or investment discretion over 588,523.412 shares which are held for the benefit of its clients by its separate accounts, externally managed accounts, registered investment companies, subsidiaries and/or other affiliates. Prudential is reporting the combined holdings of these entities for the purpose of administrative convenience.

These shares were acquired in the ordinary course of business, and not with the purpose or effect of changing or influencing control of the Issuer. The filing of this statement should not be construed as an admission that Prudential is, for the purposes of Sections 13 or 16 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the beneficial owner of these shares.

Included in the total number of shares stated above are 22 convertible bond which are held by Prudential on behalf of another person and are convertible into common stock at a ratio of 1:31.74600.