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SUMMARY

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In summary, our observations, admittedly limited, both from our laboratory data and from reports of other investigators lead us to believe with considerable confidence that PCBs do degrade in the environment. The complexity of the commercial mixtures has, however, hampered the determination of the varying rates of degradation of all the possible isomers.

Monsanto's sales actions have definitely reduced the amount of PCBs that could be introduced into the environment.

In those applications in which the use of PCBs is considered essential, namely transformers and capacitors, further actions will assure strict environmental control on PCBs.

In transformers the use of the lower chlorinated biphenyls along with proper handling during manufacture, use and repair and proper disposal of waste fluid by high temperature incineration should result in acceptable control.

For the capacitor application the development of Aroclor 1016, which satisfied all of the industry's requirements relating to dielectric characteristics and handling properties as well as having Underwriter Laboratory fire-resistance approval, permits the continued use of PCBs in this important hermetically sealed application but with a fluid that has a significantly lower content of the slower degrading isomers. The use of this material accompanied by proper handling and disposal of the scrap fluid by high temperature incineration represents in our considered opinion a significant step forward in our efforts to control the impact of PCBs on the environment.



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