

DRAFT WORKER NOTIFICATION LETTER
August 5, 1991

Dear X,

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a federal agency that researches worker health, released preliminary results of a study on the health effects of dioxin (2,3,7,8-TCDD) in August of 1990.

The study included some workers at two Monsanto locations--Nitro, West Virginia, and Sauget, Illinois--and employees at 10 sites outside Monsanto. Monsanto provided NIOSH with information on employees who worked in departments with potential dioxin exposure.

NIOSH found seven cases of a rare cancer called soft tissue sarcoma, five of them among Nitro workers. That finding prompted Monsanto to update a 1980 study of employees involved in a 1949 accident with trichlorophenol, which contained low levels of dioxin.

The results of this updated study are encouraging. Workers exposed to only TCDD do not have a higher risk of cancer, including soft tissue sarcoma. In fact, death rates among this group were no different from others not exposed to TCDD in the plant, those living near the plant or the general U.S. population.

Monsanto's updated study also confirmed earlier findings that employees who worked with p-aminobiphenyl (PAB) have an increased risk of bladder cancer. This already has been reported to employees and a medical monitoring program has been set up for PAB-exposed workers.

The risk of soft tissue sarcoma and lung cancer might be higher among employees exposed to PAB or among those who develop the skin condition chloracne. However, because of the small number involved in the study and because of other potential exposures, such as smoking, this finding should be considered preliminary.

Another study to investigate this point further is currently under way at three sites--Nitro, Sauget and the J.F. Queeny Plant in St. Louis. Results will be reported when the study is complete.

If you would like more information about these studies or have questions, please contact me.

Medical Director

DSW 134228

DRAFT FACT SHEET
August 5, 1991

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

1. Workers exposed only to dioxin (2,3,7,8-TCDD) have no higher risk of cancer or other cause of death.
2. Workers exposed to PAB (p-aminobiphenyl), as reported in earlier studies, had higher risk of bladder cancer.
3. Workers exposed to PAB or who developed the skin condition chloracne after exposure to PAB might be at higher risk of soft tissue sarcoma or lung cancer. However, because a small number was involved in the study and because of other potential exposures, such as smoking, this finding is preliminary.
4. Another study to further research any link between PAB exposure and soft tissue sarcoma or lung cancer is being conducted. It includes employees at the Nitro, W.G. Krummrich and J.F. Queeny plants.

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