

ANNOUNCEMENT

Monsanto

As you can see by the attached newspaper article, we are currently working with the federal government in an epidemiology study.

During the past three weeks the Texas City plant has been visited on three occasions by officials from OSHA and NIOSH. You may already know that they are conducting a study in this geographic area of deaths they suspect were caused by brain tumors. The study was instigated due to a complaint from a former employee of Union Carbide here in Texas City. While examining records available from a variety of sources, OSHA identified five brain tumor related deaths of former Monsanto employees that occurred since the early days of the plant (1940's).

Our Corporate Department of Medical and Environmental Health (DMEH) and location industrial hygiene department began examining health records and death certificates upon hearing of the government studies. These studies were underway when we were contacted by OSHA. Two of the five brain tumor related deaths have been earmarked by DMEH for more detailed study.

An extensive epidemiology study must be conducted to determine the statistical significance of these deaths in this geographic area. Such a study will involve examination of personnel records, medical histories and work histories of employees and former employees of several companies. We are trying to cooperate fully and are coordinating our efforts with OSHA officials.

On the most recent visit, an OSHA official monitored personnel exposure in the AN plant. While his data is still being analyzed, our samples, collected from identical areas, indicated exposures well below the 2ppm standard. He did comment that he found no violations and was impressed by our entire plant's employee protection and safety efforts.

We do not believe there is any cause for undue concern, and we intend to keep you informed as new developments occur.

P. E. Brubaker
Plant Manager

03/06/79
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RSV 0006948

2nd plant reports brain tumor deaths

By BILL INMAN
Post Reporter

A federal health investigation into the brain cancer deaths of 10 chemical workers at Union Carbide's Texas City plant has turned up five additional brain cancer deaths at Monsanto's nearby chemical facility.

Both plants once produced the cancer-causing agent vinyl chloride. The substance has been linked by scientists to the brain tumor glioblastoma multiforme.

"We're trying to cooperate and coordinate our efforts fully with the government," said Monsanto spokesman John

Spano from the company's St. Louis headquarters.

"We're concerned, as others are, about the incidence of this form of cancer. We want to stress, however, that the glioblastoma form has not been determined in these last five cases."

The federal investigation stemmed from a Union Carbide worker's complaint received Nov. 27 by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

A scientific team including OSHA and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health specialists soon found at least 10 Union Carbide workers had died of brain cancer between 1962 and 1978.

Six of the 10 victims had glioblastoma

multiforme listed as cause of death on their death certificates. And another two of the group were thought to have that same form of cancer. An 11th Union Carbide worker, still living, also has been diagnosed as having the glioblastoma tumor.

Monsanto began sifting health records and death certificates of some 1,300 workers after it learned of the Union Carbide study, Spano said. OSHA officially approached the plant Feb. 14 and conducted chemical exposure checks.

"It's far too early to make any kind of judgment," said Dr. Joseph Wagner, monitoring the OSHA investigation from Washington.

"At this stage of the game, we're concentrating on Union Carbide, where we feel we have a good sampling."

George Pettigrew, regional NIOSH director, said the records of current and former Union Carbide workers — some 10,000 — are being reconstructed for an epidemiological study.

The time-consuming study will include researching demographic disease patterns and records of plants that produce vinyl chloride. Study results are expected to be months away.

Complicating the record-gathering process, said Pettigrew, is the latency

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Another chemical plant finds brain tumor deaths

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period involved. "It appears that maybe 20 years or so after vinyl chloride exposure, the cancer shows itself. That's something like a time bomb, and it makes our job a lot more difficult."

Two of the five brain cancer deaths at Monsanto have already been earmarked by company researchers for detailed glioblastoma tests, said Spano.

"Nothing has been confirmed thus far," he said.

Monsanto purchased the plant in the mid-40s from the federal government. Vinyl chloride monomers were used in production from 1953 to 1968. Unlike the

Union Carbide plant, Monsanto no longer processes the material.

No Monsanto employee complaints have been filed with federal agencies concerning vinyl chloride, said Joe Clark, head of personnel at the Texas City plant.

He said the company has notified workers through staff meetings of the potential hazard.

Area OSHA director R. Davis Layne said no citations have been issued against Union Carbide or Monsanto in the past six months for chemical exposure above legal levels.

He said there are "too many complicating factors at this point" to make any definitive connection between the chemical and the Texas City deaths.

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RSV 0006949

03/06/79
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