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Monsanto Cutting PCB Manufacture

ST. LOUIS (UPI) — Monsanto Co., the nation's leading supplier of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), used as an electric insulator, said it would stop production of the chemical by Oct. 31, 1977, because of possible hazardous effects on humans.

Monsanto said yesterday the phasing out of production over the next year would give time for manufacturers to find substitute materials. Substitutes developed by the electrical industry are being tested, although they may not prove as effective in resisting fire as PCB.

The Environmental Protection Agency, which had called polychlorinated biphenyl a "significant hazard to human health and the environment," welcomed the news of Monsanto's decision.

"The Monsanto decision is a significant step in dealing with the total problem of PCB contamination," said EPA Administrator Russell E. Train.

"Environmental contamination will continue to be a problem due to the millions of PCBs already in landfills, soils, river and lake sediments, in our air and water and in wildlife and human tissue. This contamination will be there for years—moving into life systems, including humans."

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Monsanto to end PCBs

Production of PCBs in the U. S. will be stopped even sooner than Congress demanded. Although a bill passed last week calls for an end to the manufacture of PCBs within three years, Monsanto Co., the sole U. S. producer of the compounds, announced that it will complete distribution of all inventories and withdraw completely from the PCB market by no later than Oct. 31, 1977. Earle H. Harbison Jr., general manager of Monsanto's Specialty Chemicals Div., says that the electrical power supply industry, which uses PCBs as insulating fluids, is developing substitutes for the environmentally dangerous chemicals.

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Monsanto to quit making PCB in '77

4377

ST. LOUIS (UPI) — Monsanto Co., the nation's leading supplier of polychlorinated biphenyl, used as an electric insulator, said Tuesday it would stop production of the chemical by Oct. 31, 1977, because of possible hazardous effects on humans.

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Monsanto said last January it would eventually stop production of PCB but no date was set. Polychlorinated biphenyl has been used since about 1930 as fire-resistant fluids and electric insulating in capacitors and transformers.

Monsanto once made as much as 85 million pounds of PCB a year, but that production has dropped to about 27,000 pounds in recent years as fears about environmental damage mounted.

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