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FROM (NAME & LOCATION): C.F. Buckley - W.G.K.

DATE: August 13, 1973

SUBJECT: Material Spilled from Transformer

REFERENCE: Havana, IL August 9, 1973

cc: G.L. Bratsch
J.W. Garrett
A.E. Leisy
D.C. Otto
W.B. Papageorge

TO : P.E. Heisler

1. The accident occurred on August 9, 1973 on U.S. Highway 136 approximately 2 miles East of Havana, Illinois. A flat bed truck carrying a large G.E. Transformer and what appeared to be a crate of household items swerved to avoid two horses loose on the highway and ran off the road into a ditch alongside a field of corn. The transformer was damaged and leaked transformer fluid - Pyranol or Ascarol. The Illinois EPA became involved on August 10, 1973 and Bill Hoyle called me for advice. I told him there would be no fume problem but stream pollution might be a problem depending on the circumstances. I advised A.E. Leisy and W.B. Papageorge.

2. Larry Eastef and Keith Weber of Peoria office of EPA Water Pollution called and we discussed the water pollution possibilities. They were waiting for a report from the EPA representative Jim Leiniche on the site. I told them that a Monsanto representative would go to the site, probably J. Grant.

3. I reached the site at 7:45 p.m. and found that the EPA representative had left around 6 p.m. and the transformer had been removed. The wrecker crew told me they had drained about 5 gallons of fluid from the transformer into a drum and had also spilled some on the ground. He showed me the area. There was a small stained area which was damp with Aroclor but no indication of a major spill and there were no pools of material anywhere on the surface. People were sorting through the wreckage and picking up various household items. There was a State Trooper on site who told me the EPA representative had been expecting me but had concluded I was not coming. None of the household items were near the spot where the transformer had been and, as there was no material on the ground surface I decided to find a phone and contact the EPA.

4. Through the Emergency Phone No. 525EMER, which Bill Hoyle gave us when he was at WGK. I got in touch with John Forneris who then got Jim Leiniche to call me. We talked for some time and the salient points of our conversation were:

a. The transformer had been on the ground since the previous day through two rainstorms.

b. It was not certain that it was full of pyranol when shipped.

c. Assuming that it was full approximated 400 gallons of fluid had run out of it and had been soaked up by the ground. This surprised me but the ground was very sandy and Jim said that the other material they spilled had soaked in very quickly.

d. There is a very high water table - about 10 feet down and considerable movement of ground water towards the river. There are wells supplying private houses on farms between the site and the river.

My recommendations were:

i. As soon as possible the ground around the spot should be dug out. Jim knew of a hazardous material landfill within 30 miles where the soil could be dumped.

ii. There was no immediated danger to the residents because of the low solubility. However the well water should be analyzed for PCB on a continuing basis as prolonged use of contaminated water might cause a problem. Refer to Jack Garrett for further information.

iii. The farmer had expressed some concern about PCB being picked up by his corn. Jim said he seemed surprisingly well informed. I thought the risk was small from what I had seen but would find out what I could do about the possibility and also whether there was an analytical method for PCB in corn!

iv. The liquid they had collected should be disposed of safely. The owner or whoever is responsible may contact us to have it incinerated but he was free to use other similar services if he wished. We had no facilities to handle the soil but Rollins Purle might undertake it if EPA decided against the landfill route.

v. Jim Leiniche said they should get authority from the insurer to engage a contractor to remove the

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soil but could use government owned services in an emergency. I said that in view of what he had observed about the porosity of the of the soil that no time should be lost in order to minimize the amount reaching the ground water (if indeed 400 gallons had been lost). Once in the ground water leaching would be very slow.

Please have someone advise Jim Leiniche on point (iii) if possible. I gave him Bill Papageorge's home phone number if he needed further help this weekend. If you have any questions of me I will be at Pinewood Lodge Trailer Park, P.O. Box 441, Plymouth, Mass. from Wednesday, August 15 to Monday, August 20. Phone is (617) 746-3548.

C.F. Buckley

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