

NOTICE

The following bulletin was posted in St. Louis today:

"CMA/DOW ACRYLONITRILE STUDY — The Chemical Manufacturers Association (CMA) has now completed an industry-sponsored chronic feeding study, begun in 1976, in which a specific strain of laboratory rats was fed relatively high levels of acrylonitrile (AN) in their drinking water.

"The study, conducted under contract at Dow Chemical Company's toxicology laboratories, indicates AN is an animal carcinogen in this strain of rats when administered at 35, 100, and 300 parts per million (ppm) in the diet.

"It should be emphasized, however, that the information contained in this study is not unexpected or new. It confirms, through more extensive testing, tentative conclusions reached in January, 1977, when an interim report from this same study was first made public. Monsanto informed all employees of the interim results at that time. Later that year the Food and Drug Administration cited this interim data in banning our Cycle-Safe beverage containers.

"CMA is now in the process of transmitting the report on the final test results to appropriate Federal regulatory agencies. This could trigger a new round of reports concerning what the press may misconstrue as "new" information.

"As a result of the interim findings of the CMA/Dow Study, Monsanto initiated its own animal feeding studies on AN — one to confirm the CMA/Dow results — and another, at lower levels to provide data for a better understanding of the potential risks to humans. The results of this work are expected by mid-1980, and will be shared with employees and the Federal regulatory agencies.

"The important point for all Monsanto employees to keep in mind regarding AN is that human cancer problems have surfaced in either of the two studies known to have been done to determine the cause of death among AN workers.

"One of these studies was done by Monsanto on its own workers in 1977. Three hundred fifty-two employees who worked with AN at two Monsanto locations were studied. We found that only 15 of these workers have died from any and all causes. Based on standard U. S. death rate statistics, researchers would expect to find 18 deaths in a group of this size. We then determined the cause of death in the deceased workers and found that three of the 15 died from cancer. This is about the ratio researchers would expect, based on standard cause of death statistics for the U.S. population as a whole. Simply stated, there was no evidence from this study to suggest that Monsanto AN workers are experiencing any unusual risk of developing cancer as a result of their exposure in the workplace.

"As Monsanto employees, you should also know that your company manufactures and uses AN under stringent health and safety precautions, and always has. In recent years, Monsanto has taken several significant steps in its domestic operations to further insure that employee health is protected. In 1977, Monsanto undertook measures to reduce employee exposures below the then existing standard. These exposure levels were reduced even further in 1978 and improved monitoring measures were implemented. At the present time, all domestic employee exposures are at or below the current 2 ppm OSHA standard. Furthermore, the company meets all regulatory requirements regarding the use of AN in its products.

"So, in summary, notwithstanding the CMA animal test results, we have seen no human evidence that could be viewed as cause for alarm for our employees. This is based on our own study of cause of death in former AN employees, exposed to higher levels of AN than the current standard. Obviously, we will continue to monitor the situation very closely and will take any additional actions necessary to maintain a safe workplace and safe products, not only with respect to AN but with all Monsanto products and materials."

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