Monsanto

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DATE: February 28, 1991

SUBJECT: PCB Issues - February Highlights

REFERENCE:

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I. Regulatory Issues

- ATSDR has decided not to include PCBs in the first group of 25 compounds targeted for development of Emergency Response Protocols for hospital emergency rooms, physicians, and poison control center usage. Dr. R. Tominack, Department of Occupational Medicine, is a member of the CMA committee involved in the ER Protocol development, and is following this issue and PCBs, in particular, closely.

- EPA finally published Drinking Water Standards for PCBs and 37 other chemicals. The MCL for PCBs is 0.0005 mg/l (0.5 ppb) and the MCL_g is zero. The Agency effectively ignored all comments submitted by Monsanto, CMA, the Industry PCB Consensus Group, and numerous other industry subcommittees on this issue.

II. Miscellaneous

- The NIOSH/Bloomington Indiana PCB epidemiology study continues to cause political issues. NIOSH is in the process of publishing a revised peer-reviewed study of the Westinghouse workers which includes a number of changes in conclusions. Most notably, there is an excess of malignant melanoma and brain cancer observed; however, "malignant melanoma was not related to PCB exposure". "There was also a non-significant excess of brain cancer mortality which increased with duration of employment". "[Emphasis added] - This difference compared to the control group was not statistically significant".

  The CMA PCB Panel and the Industry PCB Consensus Group has decided not to submit our comments and the findings of our independent toxicology consultants to the Indiana State Board of Health on this issue.

III. Plants

- Requests for the PCB Annual Document have been sent out to all Monsanto Plants with a due date of March 30 for return to Environmental Policy Staff. This document is a requirement of the Federal PCB regulations and is also a convenient way to track PCB issues and equipment at Monsanto Plants. Corporate data is tracked inhouse by a PC data base and is available for rapid retrieval when PCB issues arise at plants.

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The current trend to stop or limit landfill disposal of wastes from other states may have a major affect on disposal of PCBs from Monsanto Plants since there are relatively few "PCB approved" landfills. South Carolina and Alabama currently have efforts to limit wastes from other states, and now Nevada which has one of the best PCB landfills is threatening to limit wastes from other states. In the near future, transformer carcass "cleaning" and destruction/metals reclamation may be the only alternatives for PCB electrical equipment at a potentially significant increase in costs.

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