

PRESS QUERY

Xerox to RLN

COMPANY (OpUnit or Corporate): MIC

SUBJECT: TRACE LEVELS OF TCDD IN ORTHOCHLOROPHENOL

REPORTER & MEDIA: John Frank, Columbia Missourian
(314) 442-3161

TIME & DATE: February 16, 1979 -- 3:40 p.m.

QUESTION & RESPONSE:

☒ K. W. Easley
☒ News Bureau
☒ J. T. Nolan
☒ J. E. McKee
___ D. R. Bishop
___ W. J. McCarville
___ W. R. Mulhall
☒ J. F. Hussey-Washington, D.C.
☒ S. Pickard-Washington, D.C.
☒ New York Public Relations
___ Brussels Public Relations
___ MAP PR
☒ MCI PR (J. Spano)
☒ MIC PR (G. Young)
___ MPR PR
___ MTC PR
___ INT'L PR
☒ J. R. Foehr
☒ T. L. Gossage
☒ E. H. Harbison
☒ J. C. McPhillips
☒ J. S. Metcalf
☒ G. Roush

Comment: The nature of the reporter's continuing questioning is that Monsanto knew TCDD was present in the OCP and that not testing our OCP reserve sample until one month after the spill was an unconscionable act.

- Q. Harry Gilmer (EPA Region VII) says he never asked Monsanto to analyze the reserve sample of OCP, but rather to prepare two samples for EPA analysis. You said he asked you to test your product sample for TCDD. Whose telling the truth?
- A. The sequence of events was that Harry Gilmer called Monsanto and asked if there were any TCDD in the OCP. We said no, we never found any. He asked us if we ever tested the product reserve sample from this shipment. We said no, we hadn't. Mr. Gilmer said, will you test your reserve sample for TCDD and will you prepare two samples for EPA evaluations. We said we would. We reported the trace TCDD levels in a phone call the p.m. of Feb. 9 and delivered two samples to the airport on Feb. 10 for the EPA to evaluate.
- Q. Why did this one sample have TCDD levels and your other evaluations not show it?
- A. TCDD is a production impurity. Due to process variabilities, we developed the TCDD. We are working to find where in the process the small amount got in and eliminate the contamination. (Went into dioxin ubiquity from the position paper).

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Q. Will you send me a press release when you find the problem in your OCP?

A. There will be no press release. The contamination is at a miniscule level, just barely above what sophisticated analytical equipment can measure. We'll find the contamination and eliminate it. We're not concerned.

Q. Your not concerned?

A. No, this low level contaminant is no threat to the citizens of Sturgeon. We haven't found it in the past and we'll work to eliminate it.

Q. Has the EPA asked for the health records of your workers in the Illinois plant that makes OCP?

A. No.

Q. It sure would be reassuring to the Sturgeon residents to know that your workers at the plant, exposed over 40 years of production, didn't have health problems.

A. I know of no health problems associated with our OCP production unit. If I can get any facts on this, I'll get them to you.

Warren Easley reports from Washington that the EPA has asked the county health people to draw blood and urine samples from cleanup workers and a press release will be issued.

Dr. Roush called Dr. Poole, EPA, and learned that in addition to blood/urine samples from cleanup workers, the EPA has a list of 15 other things they might do. Steve Jellineck will decide how many they will do.

Attached is an interesting feature in the Feb. 12, 1979, C&E News on dioxins.

Source of Answer: Position Paper

Handled by: R. C. Isham