

BRIEFING OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION

- * As you know, Monsanto has been testing at the plant for dioxin stemming from the handling of the herbicide 2,4,5-T here in the mid-1960s.
- * Test results show dioxin in soil samples in a small area of the plant ^{between} ~~near~~ the drum and railcar loading facility next to the Amines unit.
- * The dioxin is localized and company medical officials assure us that the dioxin, ~~contained as it is in the soil,~~ poses no hazard to you, the public or the environment.

II. PURPOSE

- * I want to explain to you what the test results were, why no hazards exist and what actions we are taking.
- * There is no reason for alarm, but we want to keep you informed because you work here and you have a right to know.

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III. TESTING

- * Water, air and soil samples were taken at several locations around the plant. We concentrated on areas we thought most likely to have dioxin if any existed. If it was here, we wanted to find it.
- * Water -- Five water samples were taken, and none contained dioxin.
- * Air -- Eight air samples were taken. Five contained no dioxin. Three contained virtually non-detectable levels -- .01 part per quadrillion. That's one millionth of a billionth.
- * That level is so small that it presents no risk to people at the plant. It's much lower than levels found in the air of some major cities.
- * Soil -- 26 soil samples were taken. 24 were negative (non-detectable). Two detected dioxin at levels of 125 parts per billion and 49 parts per billion in the top two inches of soil.
- * One of these soil samples had dioxin at levels in the low parts per million range four to six inches below the surface.

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- * These positive soil samples, and the three air samples with sub trace levels, were in the area where 2,4,5-T was handled during two periods from 1965 to 1967. (Nov., 1965, to Jan. 1966 and May, 1967, to Oct., 1967)
- * The plant converted it from a solid into a liquid, then shipped it on for further processing.
- * All the positive soil samples are believed to be the result of inadvertent spillage in the loading and unloading of 2,4,5-T.

IV. LOCALIZED PROBLEM

- * We didn't expect to find dioxin, but it is important that we found it only in one, small area of the plant.
- * The potential for exposure is very low, for four reasons:
 1. First, it wasn't found in the air in any meaningful levels.
 2. Second, the findings in the soil were below the surface.
 3. Third, the dioxin binds tightly to soil particles and stays there.

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4. Fourth, sunlight degrades dioxin, so any that was on the surface should be gone, posing no hazard.

* Therefore, Monsanto medical officials say that because the dioxin is below the surface away from contact, it is no danger to you or to anyone in the plant.

V. ACTIONS

* However, we are taking action that should respond to the concerns of any reasonable person, regardless of their knowledge of dioxin and the situation here.

1. First, we will do more testing to define precisely the area around the rail siding which contains dioxin. That work will begin immediately.

2. Second, after the testing is done, we will cover the area with plastic sheeting and with more shell to reduce even further any potential for exposure.

3. Third, we have notified federal, state and parish officials today ~~and will work with them~~ ^{we will} to determine

if any further steps are appropriate ^{and implement} them accordingly

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VI. COMMUNICATIONS STEPS

- * We're talking about this situation now, before all the testing is done, because you deserve to know.
- * As I said, we've also told government officials, and later today we will hold a press briefing to inform the news media and the public.
- * We want people to know that the dioxin is in a localized area, that it presents no hazard, and that other steps are being taken.

VII. FURTHER INFORMATION

- * We've prepared a question and answer sheet that may help you become better informed. Please take it with you.
- * Also, we have available a more detailed background paper on dioxin. If you want one, your supervisor has them available.
- * I'll be glad to answer your questions. If I can't answer them now, I'll get the answers and get back to you.
- * If you have more questions later, ask your supervisor and he'll get back to you as soon as possible.

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(ANSWER QUESTIONS NOW)

VIII. SUMMARY

* Let me summarize:

1. Tests found dioxin in two soil samples in a localized area where 2,4,5-T was handled some 16 years ago.
2. The dioxin in the soil poses no threat to anyone because it is locked tightly to the soil particles below the surface.
3. We are taking a number of actions to inform people of the findings and to continue to act responsibly.

* We will continue to keep you informed of any other significant developments.

* That's important. As you well know, the news media focuses much attention on this issue, much of it sensationalized. That may happen here. If it does, it's important that you, your families and your neighbors and friends know the facts.

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