Monsanto

Medical, A2SC

March 13, 1974

MCA "Meat Wrappers Asthma"
(Polyvinyl Chloride)

J. Ellsworth - 1870
W. Easley - 1920
C. Eby - 1920
M. Corbett - 5358
G. W. Ingle - 1920

TO George Roush, Jr., MD
A2SA

Minutes

A subcommittee of the MCA "Technical Task Group on Vinyl Chloride Research" met March 6th to outline a program to evaluate the effects of exposure to the thermal decomposition products of polyvinyl chloride films. This meeting was scheduled as a result of the March 1st meeting reported on by G. W. Ingle (GWI to EFW, 3/1/74).

The scope and mission of the project was stated to be "To determine if adverse health effects result from exposure to polyvinyl chloride film decomposition products produced when hot wire cutting or thermal sealing the film".

Philip Witorsch, M.D., Chairman, Pulmonary Disease Department, George Washington University, was present as a consultant to Borden Company. He expressed the following views:

1) He doubts the actual existence of a specific "meat wrappers asthma" that can be related to any specific factor.

2) He believes that people who wrap meat have a high degree of respiratory disease.

3) He recommended that epidemiology studies be conducted to define the incidence and degree of respiratory disease among meat wrappers. He suggested both industry-related and randomly-employed controls be used.

4) He recommended that the study be conducted on a contract basis with University-based faculty. He suggested:

a) Dr. S. Katz - Georgetown University
b) Dr. K. Moser - U. of Calif., San Diego
c) Dr. W. Ball - Johns Hopkins U. Med. School

5) He strongly recommended that the senior investigator be a pulmonary physiologist rather than an epidemiologist.

In other discussions, participated in by representatives from

MCA "Meat Wrappers Asthma" cont.

Borden, Ethyl, Filmco, Goodyear, Reynolds Metal, and Tenneco, it became apparent that the exposure to the thermal decomposition products in meat wrapping rooms and produce wrapping areas is very obvious. Mention was made of haze in the produce wrapping "lofts". It was also pointed out that the Meat Cutters Union representatives are chronic complainers and that total elimination of the visable decomposition products would not end their complaints. Furthermore, it is probable that the production of decomposition products may be as great during heat sealing as during cutting.

Two working groups were established. One coordinated by T. M. Finnegan, Filmco, to assemble a list of potential investigators to conduct the epidemiology study. The second, coordinated by Al Cummings, Borden, to review the available literature on the thermal decomposition products of PVC film.

It was estimated that the cost of the program would be $100,000 to $150,000 and that it would be funded by share contributions of $15,000 to $20,000 per company.

Discussion

The stated objective was to broadly study all major employee groups exposed to PVC film decomposition products. However, when I suggested that screening tests be included in the epidemiology study to detect effects other than respiratory disease, I received very little support. I recommended that if Monsanto supports this project that we insist that the protocol be adequate to determine the presence or absence of systemic effects such as liver or renal involvement.

It is not obvious to me that a specialist in pulmonary function is the best choice to conduct the epidemiology study. If more qualified groups are available, they should be suggested to the committee within the next two weeks.

Future

1) A meeting of selected PVC film manufacturers and representatives from the Meat Cutters Union will be held March 13, 1974. Monsanto was not invited.

2) The next meeting of this MCA PVC Task Group Steering

MCA "Meat Wrappers Asthma" cont.

Committee will be held March 27, 1974. A list of potential locations and investigators for the epidemiology study will be reviewed. The thermal decomposition product literature will be reviewed and future analytical and toxicological programs outlined.

3) A symposia relative to VCM pathology will be held May 10, 1974 in New York under the auspices of MCI and MAS. The industry contact is Dr. Dernehl of Union Carbide.

Paul L. Wright

/bkp

M[illegible]facturing Chemists Associat[illegible]

PR[illegible]POSED A[illegible]DITI[illegible]NS
TO THE
VINYL [illegible]HLORIDE RESEARCH PRO[illegible]RAM

My company hereby pledges its pr[illegible] share [illegible] the funds required [illegible] provide $80,[illegible] in support [illegible] the research programs on the met[illegible]bolism of vinyl [illegible] ride and on possible teratogenic properties of vinyl chloride, in accordance with the research proposals submitted by The D[illegible]w Chemi[illegible] Compan[illegible] and distributed to research sponsors on January [illegible], 1974. It is understood that our share will be pro rated on the basis of our production capacity of vinyl chloride monomer plus polyvinyl chloride resin, and that in any case our commitment will not exceed $ [illegible].

Signed ____GE[illegible]______________

Name (typed) ________________________

Title ________________________

Company ________________________

Mailing Address ________________________

____

Telephone (   )   -   ext.

<u>Please return one (1) signed copy by April 24, 1974 to:</u>

Mr. A. C. Clark
Manufacturing Chemists Association
1825 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20009

RSV 0003719

MCA - VC!

Wash. D.C. April 16

MCA announced today preliminary test [illegible] chloride exposure has produced angiosarcoma - a liver cancer - in mice at several exposure levels. Industrial BIO-TEST Laboratories who are conducting the MCA-administered vinyl chloride animal exposure study informed MCA that their work - although very preliminary at this point - tends to confirm the findings of Professor Cesare Maltoni (an Italian scientist who found that vinyl chloride exposure in rats caused cancer). MCA immediately notified OSHA, NIOSH, and EPA of the preliminary test results.

In the MCA-administered study, rats, hamsters, and mice are being exposed 7 hrs. a day, 5 days a week to 2500 ppm, 200 ppm and 50 ppm. After 7 months of exposure, angiosarcoma has been observed in mice at all levels, but not in rats or hamsters.

Professor Maltoni reported at the OSHA hearings on vinyl chloride February 15 that he had observed the liver cancer in rats exposed 4 hours a day, 5 days a week to 250 ppm for up to 12 months. However, he did not find the cancer in testing at the 50 ppm level.

The animal exposure study is conducting another MCA-administered study on the chemical, documenting the health experience of present and former employees who have worked with the material. The result of which also will be released and expected to be completed in the near future. Further vinyl chloride testing is under consideration

RSV 0003720

MANUFACTURING CHEMISTS ASSOCIATION

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FOR RELEASE

For Immediate Release

CONTACT
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WASHINGTON, D. C., April 10 -- The Manufacturing Chemists Association (MCA) announced today preliminary indications that vinyl chloride exposure has produced angiosarcoma -- a liver cancer -- in mice at several exposure levels.

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(more)

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MCA-3039