

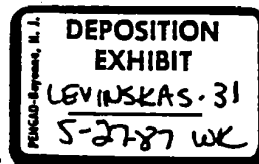
DATE November 17, 1978

SUBJECT AROCLOR 1260

REFERENCE

TO FILE

- G. Roush, Jr. - A2SA
J.C. Weber - B2SK
G.F. Barton - A3NC
W.J. McCarville - A3NC
C.F. Callis - B2SA
J.T. Garrett - A2SA



On Wednesday, November 15, 1978, I had a call from Joan Ranson, an industrial hygienist with OSHA in Philadelphia.

About two weeks ago, a Philadelphia trucking firm picked up two used transformers Westinghouse was having shipped. The truck carried other cargo of a consumer nature, namely shoes, toys and candy. The transformers were not accepted at the receiving end because their contents had spilled. Consequently, the driver took them to the truck terminal. The transformers contained AROCLOR 1260. An estimated 168 gallons of transformer fluid was spilled.

CPSC has been tracking down the consumer products. Most are believed to have been recovered.

EPA is on the scene. Details as to exactly what they are doing were not discussed at length. They apparently are offering advice on cleanup of the spill.

Two local TV stations have camera crews at hand, and the emotional level is rising.

The two leaking transformers have been removed to an enclosed area in the truck terminal. Ms. Ranson wanted to know about monitoring air levels in the enclosed area for PCBs. She also inquired about clinical or other tests which could be done on exposed workers to gauge their exposure and the nature of protective equipment which clean-up crew members should wear.

Without reiterating all aspects of this somewhat lengthy discussion, I made several statements to Ms. Ranson. She was told that there were no tests we know of to measure the after effects of exposure, and none should be necessary since there was no reason to expect that persons exposed under the conditions she had described would become ill from PCBs. With respect to air monitoring, the analysts should be careful to identify PCBs as such since AROCLOR 1260 was mixed with another chlorinated hydrocarbon. The latter was more volatile and, if detected, and expressed as PCBs, could create unnecessary concern in addition to being misleading. I saw no reason for concern about the health of employees' families from possible contact with PCB-contaminated workclothes. With respect to the emotional tensions, I suggested that they tell people there was no health hazard involved, but that efforts were being made to limit the potential environmental effects of PCBs. The use of disposable or protective clothing was justified to keep workers from taking soiled garments home and having PCBs flushed down the drain. There was no need for respiratory protection for cleanup crews. Finally, if the truck had a wooden floor-bed, it

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might be advisable to replace it. The loading dock apparently is concrete. All wastes, including spillage initially swept up with sawdust, should be disposed of in an acceptable manner according to prevailing regulations. Ms. Ranson appeared to be aware of those requirements.

I don't know how many places have been contacted. Ms. Ranson stated that they had called Dow in the mistaken belief that they manufactured PCBs. They received a suggestion that adipose tissue assays might provide a useful measure of exposure. My comments on that suggestion ended with the observation that obtaining fat samples by biopsy would be the most traumatic part of the entire episode for the individuals involved. Ms. Ranson expressed appreciation for my remarks and indicated that her supervisor, Mark Durham, Sr. Industrial Hygiene Supervisor probably would call me tomorrow - Thursday, November 16, 1978.

Let's see what happens.


George J. Levinskas

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