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Monsanto to Eliminate PCB Fluid Production

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

ST. LOUIS—Monsanto Co. said it told its U.S. capacitor and transformer industry customers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that it intends to phase out production of polychlorinated biphenyl, or PCB, dielectric insulating fluids.

The company said it hasn't set a timetable for the phaseout yet but it will "be in a planned and orderly manner." The company also said it will close its PCB manufacturing unit "as soon as we are satisfied that the electrical power supply industry's needs for usable, acceptable alternate dielectric fluids have been met."

Dielectric fluids are nonconductors of direct electrical current and are necessary in most power generating equipment.

The company said that in 1970 it began restricting use of its PCBs solely to closed electrical systems, for which a viable alternative didn't exist. That move reduced its annual PCB production more than 80%, the company said.

Monsanto also said it instituted controls in its manufacturing to minimize environmental impact.

Additionally, the company said it has been working for a number of years on non-PCB products to replace PCB fluids in capacitors and transformers. The materials are being evaluated by electrical manufacturers in the U.S.

In recent years, concern has grown over the potentially dangerous toxic effects of PCBs in the environment. The PCBs don't readily degrade, and thus present a major contamination problem. They have been cropping up in fish and other animals. Meanwhile, evidence has been mounting that even in small amounts they are toxic to man.

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claimed social scientists who go merrily on their way charging too much for too little direct patient care. The result in hospitals has been skyrocketing costs, a booming market for hospital bureaucrats, the impersonalization and delivery of health care, and a disease called the malpractice lawsuit.

Physicians scratch their heads and wonder how long can these forms of irrational behavior continue. In order to maintain their personal sanity, to keep their high standards of professional performance and to prevent the hucksters, frauds, politicians and incompetents from destroying the medical profession, the physician has discovered the need for collective action. The resolution of this problem will not come by taking some of the past and present practices of our largest corporations and imposing those practices on the health delivery system. The process can begin to change if and when physicians fight for control over the treatment of their patients by increasing the collective authority in dealing with each and every element in the system that attempts to make a profit by placing itself between the needs of the patient and the skill of the physician who has been thoroughly trained to treat those patients.

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