

ASSESSMENT OF THE BIOLOGICAL PERSISTENCE OF
POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS

By

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The research-I will review today will focus upon one aspect of Monsanto's efforts to understand the environmental impact and behavior of our polychlorinated biphenyl or PCB products.

This research was initiated early in 1969 after development of the necessary PCB analytical methodology and subsequent confirmation of Dr. Soren Jensen's identification of PCB residues in fish and birds in Sweden.

At this point in time, PCB residue data from Monsanto and external environmental monitoring programs indicated that at the previous rate of use and release of these products that some PCB homologs were beginning to reach detectable levels in fish, birds and mammals. Conversely, these data indicated to us that with the exception of localized, controllable contamination, PCB homologs with less than five chlorine atoms per molecule had not accumulated to detectable levels; even though it was known that significantly greater amounts of the PCB homologs with less than 5 chlorine atoms per molecule had been manufactured and used over the years.

Now, before discussing our biological studies, I would like to review for you the gross homolog composition of our Aroclor products and then in a very brief fashion, try and illustrate to you the complexity of these materials and hence the complexity of the problem.

In the first slide (#1), is shown the most recent data on the weight & composition of four of our Aroclor products as a function of each detectable PCB homolog. The first column on the left lists the homolog in question and the subsequent columns under each product show the weight & distribution of each PCB homolog in each product.

As most of you probably know, with the exception of Aroclor 1016, the last two digits of each product number refer to the degree of chlorination. For example, Aroclor 1221 contains 21% chlorine by weight, and so on.

Aroclor 1016 is a special case in that while it contains about 41% chlorine by weight, its penta, hexa, and heptachloro biphenyl content has been significantly reduced with respect to Aroclor 1242, a product produced by direct chlorination, containing 42% by weight chlorine. Please note that the penta, hexa, and heptachloro biphenyl homologs in Aroclor 1016 have been reduced by factors of about 8, 10, and 10, respectively, with reference to Aroclor 1242.

As you can also see, the chief constituents of Aroclor 1221 are the mono- and dichloro biphenyls, while Aroclor 1016 and Aroclor 1242 contain predominantly di-, tri-, and tetrachloro biphenyls, and Aroclor 1254, tetra, penta, and hexachloro biphenyls.

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effects of determining the homolog distribution of PCB products and as such a number of you may have seen estimations of the homolog content of these products which are significantly different. The analytical methodology used is currently in a very dynamic state and our understanding of the contents of these products increases as the methodology is improved. At this point in time, we regard these numbers as the most accurate ones currently available.

In the next slide (#2) are shown examples of low resolution - packed column electron capture chromatograms of Aroclor 1221, Aroclor 1242, Aroclor 1254, and Aroclor 1260. This is what these products look like to a residue analyst using the most commonly employed detection system.

From these chromatograms, it can be readily seen that we are dealing with multi-component products, which of course, increases the complexity of assessing every aspect of this problem - relative to a well defined single component system such as DDT.

I should mention at this point, that the PCB residues generally found in wildlife are most similar to Aroclor 1254 and Aroclor 1260 chromatograms.

The next slide (#3) demonstrates that in reality, these materials are even more complex than is generally realized. In the upper right portion of this slide is again shown a low resolution electron capture gas chromatogram of Aroclor 1242 under the optimum conditions normally employed by residue analysts. Under these conditions, Aroclor 1242 would appear to be a 15 component system.

In the lower portion of this slide is a flame ionization gas chromatogram of the same material using a high resolution S.C.O.T. column. If one carefully inspects this chromatogram, our simple 15 component product has now been resolved into 55 different components.

These facts simply indicate that all PCB products cannot be lumped together in terms of either their environmental impact or persistence.

The type of biological studies which we have carried out to date are shown in the next slide (#5). For discussion purposes, they can be conveniently divided into two categories: "Primary Bacterial Degradation Studies", an area in which research on PCBs is just beginning, and "Residue Accumulation Studies". Most of our bacterial degradation work has been centered around the fairly well known semi-continuous activated sludge degradation test.

Our residue accumulation studies have been fairly extensive and have involved the exposure of better than 2100 fish, chickens, rats and dogs to the various Aroclor products; resulting in the collection of over 1200 samples of which approximately 500 pooled samples were eventually analyzed for PCB residues.

The prime objective of these studies is given on slide #6.

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Slide #7. The semi-continuous activated sludge test procedure we used to evaluate the primary bacterial degradation rates of the Aroclor products is the test method recommended by the Soap and Detergents Association for the evaluation of the biodegradability of linear alkyl benzene sulfonate type surfactants [JAOCS 42, 986 (1965) & 46, 432 (1969)].

Primary Biodegradation - Minimum alteration of the chemical structure of the material in question to an extent that characteristic properties of the original material are no longer evident.

This procedure employs sludge from a sewage treatment plant as the source of microorganisms to which a specific amount of the material being evaluated and a synthetic sewage mixture are fed on a periodic basis in a specially designed aeration chamber. The next slide (#8) graphically illustrates what the aeration chamber looks like. It is simply a large glass cylinder with provisions for aeration, auxiliary stirring, a siphon for periodic removal of the supernatant and a septum for introduction of the test material.

The mixed liquor (sludge + water) obtained from the sewage treatment plant is initially adjusted with tap water to a suspended solids concentration of about 2500 mg/l, and 1500 ml of this mixture is then charged to the aeration chamber.

The mechanical cycle employed is shown in the next slide (#9). Each cycle is initiated by the addition of the synthetic sewage and 1 mg of the PCB product being tested.

Since the PCBs are quite water insoluble, they are fed to the unit via injection of 200 μ ls of a concentrated ethanol solution. In this manner, homogenous dispersion of the PCBs on the bacterial sludge is obtained.

After about one hour of aeration an aliquot of the mixed liquor is withdrawn from the chamber and analyzed for PCBs via UV spectrophotometry and/or electron capture gas chromatography. Aeration is continued for about 48 hours and a second sample is withdrawn for analysis. At this point, the aeration is stopped and the sludge allowed to settle, the sludge volume and pH are then checked to insure that the unit is operating satisfactorily. Two-thirds of the supernatant is withdrawn and replaced with tap water; aeration is then resumed. The cycle is re-initiated by the addition of the synthetic sewage and Aroclor in question. This cycle is continuously repeated until a steady state and consistent degradation rates are obtained.

The per cent degradation rate is calculated as shown in the equation on the slide from the amounts found in the samples analyzed during each cycle.

Degradation testing of the Aroclor products shown in the next slide (#10) have been carried out over an eight month period in our laboratories. In this slide, we have shown graphically the results observed to date. Here we have plotted the mean per cent degradation

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rates for BF₃AmPy₂, Aroclor 1221, MCS 1043, a research material containing 30% by weight chlorine, Aroclor 1016 (41% chlorine), Aroclor 1242, and Aroclor 1254 versus the weight per cent chlorine present in each. The actual mean per cent degradation rates and 95% confidence limits for each material are shown in the lower left portion of the slide. These data were all obtained by UV spectrophotometry which in essence follows the decrease in the aromatic ring content and is indicative of bacterial ring cleavage. The important point to note here is that as the degree of chlorination decreases the degradation rate increases.

In order to give you a feeling for the degradation rates observed with other materials, Aroclor 1221 degrades at about the same rate as a non-linear ABS surfactant.

We have also used this technique to study p,p'-DDT and have at this point in time noted no significant primary degradation.

The next slide (#11) shows the changes in homolog distribution observed for Aroclor 1242 via electron capture gas chromatographic analyses. The upper chromatogram shows the character of the residue one hour after addition. The numbers above each peak indicate the dominant homolog or homologs present in each. The lower chromatogram is of the residue after 72 hours of exposure to the bacterial sludge. It can be readily seen by comparing the two chromatograms that all the dichloro biphenyls, most of the trichloro biphenyls, and a significant portion of the tetrachloro biphenyls are degraded in 48 hours under these test conditions.

The conclusions which we draw from this preliminary data are shown in the next slide (#12).

Next, I will discuss our "Aroclor Residue Studies" (Slide #13).

Our white leghorn chicken studies (Slide #14) have consisted of a 90 day oral exposure of Aroclor 1242, Aroclor 1254, and Aroclor 1260 at 1, 10, and 100 ppm feed levels and a repeat 90 day study of Aroclor 1242 at the 2, 4, and 8 ppm feed levels. 336 Chickens were employed from which a total of 521 tissue, chick, and egg samples were collected. Of these 112 pooled samples were analyzed for PCB residues.

In the next slide (#15) are shown the results of the 90 day oral exposure of white leghorn chickens to Aroclor 1242. On the left side, we have shown the oral exposure levels which were 1, 10, and 100 ppm, the theoretical residue in ppm, which would have been found in the lipid if the chickens had retained all of the Aroclor 1242 which they orally ingested. As you can see, these levels are ~125, 1250, and 12,500 ppm. Next is shown the actual average level in ppm found in the lipid of the muscle, fat, and liver samples and then the levels found after 30 days on a PCB free diet. The important points to note are that ~90% of all the Aroclor 1242 consumed is directly excreted and/or metabolized and that after 30 days on a PCB free diet 35%, 44%, and 57% of the PCBs retained after 90 days of continuous exposure at the 1, 10, and 100 ppm levels was excreted and/or metabolized.

On the right hand side of this slide is shown the homolog distribution of the product feed and that of the residues isolated from the tissues after 90 days of exposure and 30 days on a PCB free diet. The numbers across the top simply refer to the number of chlorine atoms per biphenyl molecule. As you can see, Aroclor 1242 contains dominant amounts of the di- through pentachloro-biphenyls and a minor amount of hexachlorobiphenyl. After 90 days of exposure the dichlorobiphenyl was no longer observable and the dominant components were the tri- through pentachloro biphenyl homologs. After 30 days on a PCB free recovery diet, the hexachloro biphenyl is now a dominant component because of continued excretion and/or metabolism of the lower chlorinated homologs.

In the next slide (#16) are shown the results for the 90 day oral exposure of Aroclor 1254 in white leghorn chickens at the 1, 10, and 100 ppm exposure levels. The theoretical residues are the same as before and we have again shown the actual levels found in the tissues after 90 days of continuous exposure and 30 days on a PCB free diet. In this instance, ~70-72% of the Aroclor 1254 ingested was directly excreted and/or metabolized and after 30 days on a PCB free diet, ~45% of the residues retained were excreted and/or metabolized.

The homolog distribution of the product and residues is shown on the right of the slide, the product Aroclor 1254 contains minor amounts of the tri- and heptachloro homologs and dominant amounts of the tetra-, penta-, and hexachloro biphenyls. The residue after 90 days of exposure did not contain detectable amounts of the tri-chloro biphenyls and the tetrachloro biphenyls were no longer a dominant component. The dominant homologs were penta- and hexachloro biphenyls. After 30 days on a PCB free diet, the tetra-chloro biphenyls were now not detectable, the pentachloro biphenyls were a minor component, and the hexachloro biphenyls the dominant component.

In the next slide (#17) are the results for Aroclor 1260. Again, the oral exposure level and theoretical residue levels are the same and the PCB residues found in the tissues after 90 days of continuous exposure and 30 days on a PCB free recovery diet are shown. After 90 days of exposure, 57-52% of all Aroclor 1260 consumed was directly excreted and/or metabolized and after 30 days on a PCB free diet ~40% of the residues retained were excreted and/or metabolized.

As shown on the right, Aroclor 1260 contains dominant amounts of penta-, hexa-, and heptachloro biphenyls and a minor amount of octachloro biphenyl. The residues after 90 days of exposure and 30 days on a PCB free recovery diet contain minor amounts of the penta- and octachloro homologs. In both cases, the dominant homologs were the hexa- and heptachloro biphenyls.

Our albino rat work (Slide #18) has consisted of 30 day oral, 2 year chronic oral and a 3 generation rat reproduction exposure study with Aroclor 1242, Aroclor 1254, and Aroclor 1260 and a 90 day subacute

Approximately 2100 animals were used in these exposure studies from which about 400 carcasses, livers, and fat samples were collected. Two hundred of these samples were analyzed for PCB residues.

In the next slide (#19) are shown the results of our two year chronic oral exposure study of Aroclor 1242 in albino rats. The oral exposure levels were 1, 10, and 100 ppm and the theoretical residues were 8900, 80000, 800,000 ppm, respectively. The actual residues found in the tissue lipid are shown after 3, 12, and 24 months of exposure. Comparison of the residues found after 24 months to the theoretical residue levels indicates that 99% of the Aroclor 1242 fed was directly excreted and/or metabolized at all exposure levels.

As is shown on the right, Aroclor 1242 contains dominant amounts of the di- through pentachloro biphenyl homologs and a minor amount of the hexa-. The residues after two years did not contain a significant amount of the dichloro biphenyls and the dominant components were the tri-, tetra-, and pentachloro biphenyl homologs.

In the next slide (#20) are shown the results of the two year chronic oral exposure of albino rats to Aroclor 1254. The exposure and theoretical residue levels are the same as with Aroclor 1242. The residues found after 3, 12, and 24 months of exposure are also shown. Comparison of the residues after two years to the amount ingested demonstrates that 95-98% of the Aroclor 1254 consumed is directly excreted and/or metabolized.

The homolog distribution of Aroclor 1254 and the residues are shown on the right. Aroclor 1254 contains minor amounts of the tri- and heptachloro biphenyl homologs and dominant amounts of the tetra-, penta-, and hexachloro biphenyl homologs. The residues did not contain detectable levels of the trichloro homologs and the tetra-chloro biphenyls were no longer a dominant component. The dominant homologs were the penta- and hexachloro biphenyls.

The next slide (#21) shows the the results for the two year exposure of Aroclor 1260 in albino rats. Again, the exposure and theoretical residue levels are the same and the residues found in the tissues after 3, 12, and 24 months of exposure are shown. In this case 93-95% of all Aroclor 1260 ingested was directly excreted and/or metabolized.

The dominant homologs in Aroclor 1260 and the residues isolated from the tissues were similar in all cases.

In order to demonstrate the relationship between residue storage levels and the degree of chlorination of the product fed (slide #22). I have plotted the average ppm PCB found in the lipid vs the weight per cent chlorine in the product fed. These data were taken from our 90 day subacute albino rat studies with Aroclor 1221, Aroclor 1242, Aroclor 1254, and Aroclor 1260 at an exposure level of 100 ppm. As you can see, the residue storage levels decrease exponentially as the weight per cent chlorine decreases, simply demonstrating the relationship between the higher homolog content of an Aroclor product and the tissue storage level.

Our beagle dog studies (Slide #23) have consisted of a two year chronic exposure of Aroclor 1242, Aroclor 1254, and Aroclor 1260 and a 90 day subacute study of Aroclor 1221. In these studies, 103 beagle dogs were used, resulting in the collection of 263 samples, and the analyses of 146 for PCB residues.

The next slide (#24) shows the results of one two year study of Aroclor 1242 at exposure levels of 1, 10, and 100 ppm. In this study, the theoretical residue levels are ~500, 5000, and 50,000 ppm respectively. We have also shown on this slide the residue levels found after two years of exposure and after 30 and 60 day periods on PCB free recovery diets. The beagle dogs directly excreted and/or metabolized 99.6% of the Aroclor 1242 consumed and after 60 days on PCB free diets, 50-60% of PCB residue retained after two years of exposure was excreted and/or metabolized.

Aroclor 1242 contains dominant amounts of the di-, tri-, tetra-, and pentachloro homologs and a minor amount of the hexa- homolog. The residue found after two years of exposure contained no detectable levels of the dichloro homologs and dominant levels of the tri-, tetra-, hepta-, and octachloro biphenyls. The pentachloro homolog, although dominant in the product fed, was not a dominant component of the residue. After 30 days on a PCB free recovery diet, the di-, tri-, and tetrachloro biphenyls were not detectable components of the residue. At this point, the dominant components were the hexa-, hepta-, and octachloro biphenyls. The trend toward excretion and/or metabolism of the lower chlorinated homologs continued to the extent that after 60 days on the recovery diet the hexachloro biphenyl was no longer a dominant component, and the hepta- and octachloro biphenyls became the dominant constituents in the residue.

In the next slide (#25) are the results for the two year exposure of beagle dogs to Aroclor 1254. The oral exposure and theoretical residue levels are the same and the PCB residue levels found in the tissues after two years of exposure and after 30 and 60 day periods on PCB free recovery diets are again shown.

In this instance, the dogs excreted and/or metabolized 98-99% of all Aroclor 1254 consumed over a two year period. After 60 days on a PCB free recovery diet, 30-40% of the residues retained were excreted and/or metabolized. The product fed, Aroclor 1254, contains minor amounts of the tri- and heptachloro biphenyls and dominant amounts of the tetra-, penta-, and hexachloro homologs. After two years of exposure, the residue retained from the product did not contain detectable levels of the tri- or tetrachloro biphenyls, the penta-, and hexachloro biphenyls remained dominant components, and the heptachloro biphenyls became dominant constituents.

After 30 days on the PCB free recovery diet, the pentachloro homologs became a minor component of the residue, the hexa- and heptachloro biphenyls remained dominant components and the octachloro homologs became a minor component. After 60 days on the PCB free recovery diet, the pentachloro biphenyls were excreted and/or metabolized to the extent that the octachloro homologs became a dominant constituent of the residue.

The next slide (#26) shows the results for the two year oral exposure residue study of Aroclor 1260 in beagle dogs. The exposure and theoretical residue levels are the same as those for the Aroclor 1242 and Aroclor 1254 studies. Next is shown the residues which accumulated after two years of continuous exposure and the residues retained after 30 and 60 day recovery periods on PCB free diets. With this Aroclor 98-99% of the amount consumed over two years was directly excreted and/or metabolized. After 60 days on the recovery diet 41% of the retained residues were excreted and/or metabolized.

The homolog distribution of Aroclor 1260 is as shown, dominant amounts of the penta-, hexa-, and heptachloro biphenyls with a minor amount of the octachloro homologs. After two years, the PCB residue contains no detectable level of the pentachloro homologs, a minor amount of the heptachloro biphenyls, and dominant amounts of the hexachloro and octachloro homologs. After 30 days on the recovery diet, the dominant homologs are now the hexa-, hepta-, and octachloro biphenyls becoming a dominant component of the residue via loss of some of the hexachloro biphenyls. After 60 days on the recovery diet, the hexachloro biphenyls are no longer dominant components of the residue and it is now mainly the hepta- and octachloro biphenyls.

The next slide (#27) illustrates the residue fall off as a function of Aroclor and recovery period. These data are from the two year beagle dog studies and the exposure level is 1 ppm. In this graph, I have plotted the average ppm PCB found in the lipid for Aroclor 1260, Aroclor 1254, and Aroclor 1242 after two years of continuous oral exposure and then after 1 month and 2 month recovery periods on PCB free diets. This plot simply demonstrates that the PCB residues retained from Aroclor 1242 fall off more quickly than those retained from Aroclor 1254 and Aroclor 1260.

The table in the next slide (#28) shows the relative ability of fowl, small mammals, and large mammals to retain orally ingested PCBs. These data are for Aroclor 1242 at the exposure levels and periods shown. The concentration factor is calculated by dividing the maximum PCB level found in the lipid by the exposure level. As you can see from the factors, chickens retain PCBs to a greater extent than do rats or dogs.

Our fish residue work is not very extensive at this point - primarily because we have had problems in finding consulting laboratories capable of carrying out dynamic low level fish exposure studies, and secondly, because government laboratories such as those in Duluth, Minnesota, Columbia, Missouri, and Gulf Breeze, Florida are, and are, still in better positions to carry out and evaluate these types of studies.

We have done some very preliminary 21 day dynamic exposures of catfish and bluegill fingerlings to some of our Aroclor products and this generally supports the conclusions which can be drawn from literature data.

The general conclusions which we draw from these residue studies are shown in the next three slides.

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Slide #29 - Build-Up - Conclusions

Slide #30 - Fall-Off - Conclusions

Slide #31 - Alteration of Homolog Distribution - Conclusions

In summary, we feel that the results of our preliminary research support, what has and is being observed via residue analysis of environmental samples; that is to say, from a residue viewpoint, that the bulk of the PCB homologs released to the environment (PCBs with less than 5 chlorines) are subject to environmental degradation of one sort or another at measurable rates and as such have not accumulated.

E. S. Tucker

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OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

DEPARTMENT 246

STILL OPERATOR

October, 1974

SECTION V

MATERIAL HANDLING & TOXICITY DATA

SECTION VI

- A. BATCH BLOW TANKS**
- B. VACUUM JETS**
- C. #3 AND 4 STILLS**
- D. POROCEL TREATMENT**
- E. THERMINOL FURNACE**

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DEPARTMENT 246 - OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION V - MATERIAL HANDLING AND TOXICITY DATA

AROCLORS

Aroclors as manufactured in Department 246 are non-flammable liquids which may vary greatly in viscosity at room temperature. Contact with the skin should be avoided. In case of spills on the body, wash the affected areas with soap and water. Inhalation of Aroclor and Montar fumes should be avoided as they are highly toxic. Protect the skin, lungs, and eyes by wearing protective clothing, respirator, and goggles. If spilled on clothing, change to clean clothes.

BIPHENYL

Biphenyl is a flammable liquid received in tank cars from our Anniston, Alabama, plant. It is heated to 95°C and unloaded to the East BiØ storage tank. It is transferred daily to the continuous chlorinators, the catalyst mix tank, and when necessary, to the head tank for the batch chlorinators. The system is essentially closed.

Biphenyl is a solid at ambient temperature, the flash point is 113°C, the X-point is 68°C. The fumes are not dangerously deadly, but they are poisonous over a prolonged time. Breathing large amounts of vapor or dust can cause damage to respiratory passages. Wear goggles when transferring or sampling BiØ from tank cars or storage tanks.

If molten Biphenyl is spilled on the skin it should be absorbed with a clean cloth and then washed with alcohol followed by large quantities of water, or if allowed to solidify it should be scraped off and then washed with water. If spilled on clothing, change to clean clothes.

CHLORINE

Chlorine is delivered by pipeline from the chlorine department, and is used to chlorinate biphenyl to produce various Aroclors. It is a gas under normal conditions and is very toxic. A concentration of 1,000 ppm would be fatal.

At times, leaks do occur which will liberate chlorine gas into the air. Gas masks are provided in the department and are sufficient for small leaks. A Scot-Air-Pak is provided for large gas releases.

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SECTION V - MATERIAL HANDLING AND TOXICITY DATA

NATURAL GAS

Natural Gas is supplied by Illinois Power and is a mixture of Methane, Ethane, and a small amount of Propane. Natural gas is essentially odorless, however, a small amount of Mercaptan is added to give it a characteristic, pungent odor. It is lighter than air and colorless, and very flammable.

HCl OFF-GAS

Hydrogen chloride is a by-product of the chlorination of biphenyl. The gas is carried by pipeline to Dept. 217. It is a gas under normal conditions and is very toxic. A concentration of 1500-2000 ppm would be fatal in a few minutes. Do not remain in an area where enough HCl gas is present to cause discomfort in breathing. Gas masks are provided in the department and are sufficient for small leaks. A Scot-Air-Pak is provided for large gas releases.

If skin irritations persist, wash the area with large amounts of water, then report to the dispensary.

FERRIC CHLORIDE

Ferric chloride is purchased in two pound plastic bottles for use as a catalyst in the chlorinators. It is a solid under normal conditions and is not considered toxic. Some people may be allergic and develop a skin rash. Gloves should be worn to protect the hands and the eyes must be protected to keep Ferric Chloride dust from blowing in them. Large amounts of water should be used to wash any irritated areas.

LIME

Line is handled in bags and is not dangerously toxic, and is regarded as more of a nuisance. It is very hazardous to the eyes, therefore, goggles should be worn when handling it. Large quantities of water should be used to flush lime from the eyes and further treatment should be given at the dispensary. Gloves should be worn for general sanitation to keep lime off the skin and clothing.

ATTAPULGUS EARTH

Attapulgus earth is handled in bags and is not toxic. As a matter of general cleanliness, it should be kept off the skin and clothing.

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POROCEL

Porocel is handled in bags and is not considered toxic or dangerous. It is used as the material to upgrade electrical properties of Aroclor passed thru the absorbers. Handling would present a hazard to the eyes, therefore, goggles should be worn when handling this material.

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TRANSFORMER Askarel

Inspection & Maintenance Guide

Monsanto

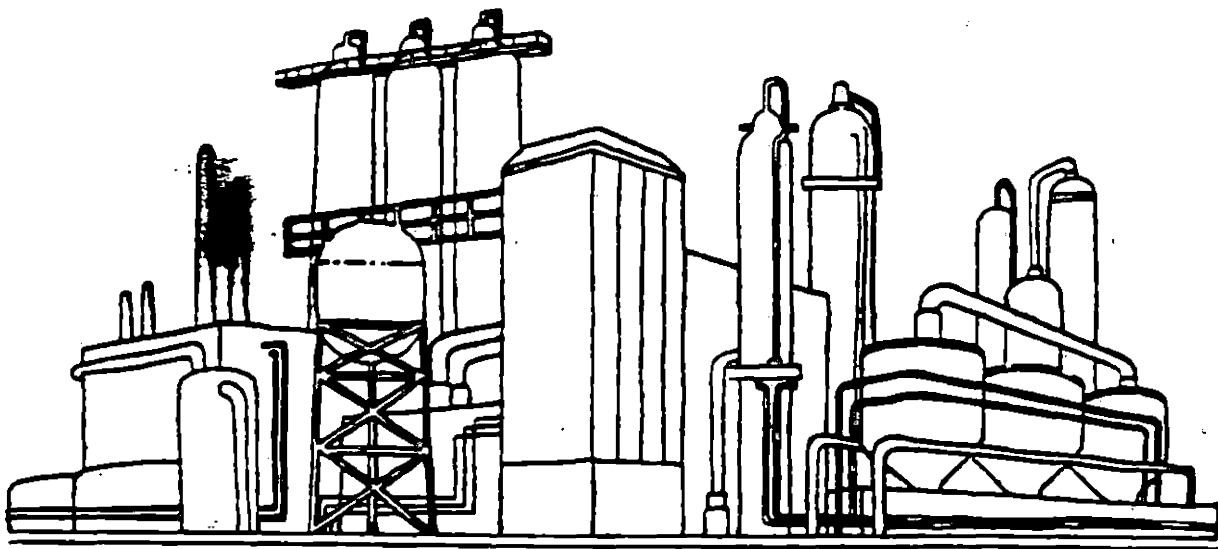


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by swelling and cracking of the exposed edge. In cases of severe deterioration, liquid seepage is usually present.

6. Check for leakage at packing gland of switching shaft. If leaking, repack with a Silastic ring type gasket.

VI. Askarel Under Excessive Temperature or Fault Conditions

The IEEE Guide also points out that,

"Chlorobenzenes used in transformer askarels begin to boil at temperatures of about 205°C, under atmospheric conditions. If the material is heated to such high temperature in a sealed system, pressure develops. Pressure will also develop in the system if the askarel is arced sufficiently to generate copious hydrogen chloride gas.

"Therefore, it is recommended that wherever possible, sealed askarel-filled equipment be provided with pressure relief devices. These devices must be large enough to provide immediate relief at a definite pressure, and to prevent further build up of pressure if decomposition continues. It must be remembered that the presence of devices of this sort does not necessarily preclude the rupturing of containing vessels, since pressure build up can be extremely rapid under violent arcing conditions."

Section C Toxicity & Safe Handling

I. Inhalation

At ordinary temperatures the chlorinated biphenyls in Askarel have not presented industrial toxicological problems. The hazard of potential toxic exposure varies with their volatility: the lower-chlorinated, more-volatile ones present more of a potential problem from the standpoint of both inhalation and skin contact. When Askarel fluids are used at elevated temperatures, engineering controls must be applied, either by the use of closed systems or by effective local-exhaust ventilation together with general workroom exhaust.

Vapors of Askarel at room temperature should not be breathed in a confined space, and no vapor of any fluid evolved at elevated temperatures should be allowed to be dispersed into the general workroom.

Inhalation tests on animals indicate that the maximum safe concentration of vapor is in the range of from 0.5 to 1.0 milligram per cubic meter of air. The threshold limit value (maximum allowable concentration of an 8-hour working day) set by the American Conference of Government Hygienists are 1.0 milligram of the lower-chlorinated biphenyl compounds per cubic meter of air and 0.5 milligram of the more-highly-chlorinated compounds, per cubic meter of air.

II. Skin Contact

Prolonged or repeated skin contact with the Askarel fluids must be avoided by the use of gloves and protective garments, because of the possible occurrence of a condition called chloracne. Although reports of this condition caused by Askarel are rare, it can be produced by excessive skin contact. If the fluid is spilled on the skin the skin should be washed in the usual manner with a soap solution.

A burn caused by contact with a hot Askarel should be treated like any ordinary burn.

For disposal instructions of Askarel fluids, see Section A - VIII, page 6.

