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NEWS

Monsanto

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Beth A. Vanderbeck
(314) 694-8527

The Chemical Group
PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
Monsanto Company
800 N. Lindbergh Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63167

"STAR" STATUS FOR MONSANTO ANNISTON

ANNISTON, Ala., Oct. 18 -- Monsanto's Company Anniston, Ala. plant has been selected by the U.S. Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as one of the few sites to achieve "STAR" status in the agency's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP).

"Every Anniston employee can be proud of this accomplishment," stated Bill DeFer, Anniston plant manager.

In February of 1992, Monsanto announced its commitment to the goal that all U.S. operating facilities would meet the stringent requirements of OSHA's VPP by the end of 1997. Anniston is the second Monsanto manufacturing facility to achieve STAR status.

To earn the VPP STAR status, a facility must undergo a very rigorous OSHA audit, demonstrating exemplary safety and health programs and practices that go far beyond compliance with regulations. In addition, STAR participants must demonstrate injury incidence and lost workday case rate at or below the national average for their industry.

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"We had a strong safety program already, but participation in OSHA's VPP has made our workplace even safer," said Lee Sparks, who has worked at Anniston for 33 years and has served for the past eight years as president of the International Chemical Workers (ICW) union, Local 125.

Presenting the STAR certificates of approval and the official flag to Monsanto at a special ceremony today was Charlie Anderson, Assistant Regional Administrator, U.S. Department of Labor - OSHA. Also present to congratulate the plant workers on their achievement was Nicholas Reding, Vice Chairman, Monsanto Company.

"For a plant to achieve STAR status is a tribute to the people who made it happen," Reding said.

The plant was approved for OSHA's VPP in May. One goal of VPP is to assist companies to qualify for STAR, the agency's most demanding and prestigious voluntary effort.

Although STAR participants are not subject to routine OSHA inspection, injury rates are checked annually and OSHA evaluates a STAR participant every three years to assure maintenance and improvement of the original approved program.

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