

PRESS QUERY

COMPANY (Op/Unit or Corporate): MIC

SUBJECT: PCBs IN COLORADO

REPORTER & MEDIA: Becky Cantwell, Longmont, (Co.)
Times-Call

TIME & DATE: October 23, 1979 - 4:00 p.m.

QUESTION & RESPONSE:

X C. F. Callis
X J. R. Foehr
X E. T. Mollica
X F. A. Provorny
X J. Ortiz
X J. C. Weber
X D. Wood
X News Bureau
X J. T. Nolan
X J. E. McKee
X J. v. Morse
___ D. R. Bishop
___ W. J. McCarville
___ W. R. Mulhall
___ J. F. Hussey-Washington, D.C.
___ S. Pickard-Washington, D.C.
___ New York Public Relations
___ Brussels Public Relations
___ MAP PR
___ MCI PR
X MIC PR R. Isham
___ MP & R PR
___ MTC PR
___ INT'L PR

- Q. Is Monsanto familiar with the problem of the 17 barrels of PCBs at the Darling farm?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Is it true that two years ago a salesman for Monsanto told the Darlings that there was no problem with the barrels at all?
- A. I would think it unlikely. At that time, and before, it was standard Monsanto practice for a person contacted about such a matter to verify if the material was PCBs, tell the people to contact the appropriate regulatory agency and make plans with the agency to have it disposed of as soon as possible.
- Q. When did Monsanto start and stop manufacturing PCBs?
- A. We began manufacturing PCBs in 1929, and went on a restricted production system in 1970 (explained the reason for continuing production for closed applications). Production stopped completely in 1977.
- Q. Why did Monsanto stop manufacturing PCBs?
- A. Because of our concerns that many of the uses of PCBs were resulting in losses to the environment.
- Q. It's been said that the PCBs on the Darling farm originated at a steak restaurant. Is it possible that PCBs were used in food processing?
- A. We don't know the details of those reports, but PCBs were used in many food processing operations as a heat transfer fluid.

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- Q. Did Monsanto ever do any safety studies on PCBs prior to the restricted sales program in 1970? If so, did Monsanto make the results public?
- A. Monsanto had done acute toxicity studies, which are short-term tests. When the concerns began to appear, we undertook numerous long-term studies, testing for a wide range of potential problems. All of our results were reported to the appropriate regulatory agencies in the 1972-73 period.
- Q. What did Monsanto do with its own PCB wastes?
- A. We operated an incinerator at the production plant to dispose of them, which we believe to be the best disposal method available.
- Q. How high do incineration temperatures have to be?
- A. 2000 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
- Q. Does Monsanto still operate its incinerator? I thought the EPA had banned incineration of PCBs.
- A. We closed the incinerator at the same time we shut down the production unit, in 1977. At the time, there were numerous commercial incinerators available for disposal of PCBs. Later, the EPA prohibited incineration, but is currently trying to approve various permits. You might contact the EPA for more information on this.
- Q. Does Monsanto feel it has any responsibility for the 17 barrels at the Darling farm?
- A. In a strict legal sense, no. That is the responsibility of the owner of the barrels. We have been cooperating with the EPA in offering advice and information, and we have talked with Dr. Darling and answered his questions.
- Q. Does Monsanto feel it should contribute to or pay for the cleanup of the contaminated materials at the farm?
- A. The responsibility lies with the owner of the material and/or the person who placed the barrels on the farm.
- Q. Did Monsanto label its PCB products with warnings? The barrels at the Darling farm were not labeled with warnings about hazards, only with "Therminol" stickers.
- A. After the concerns arose, we drummed all PCB products in yellow drums, and silkscreened warning information in seven languages. The warnings included information about the potential concerns, the procedure in case of spills or physical contamination, and the like. Additionally, all of our rail cars were labeled.

Q. Does Monsanto feel any ethical responsibility for the PCB problem, since it was the only domestic manufacturer?

A. We have conducted an untold number of short and long-term tests. We are funding university studies to see if ways can be developed to resolve the problem of PCBs in the environment. We have cooperated fully with all of the state and federal regulatory agencies involved. We voluntarily undertook a restricted sales program in 1970. Does that answer your question?

Q. Yes.

Source of Information: J. C. Weber
Position Statement

Handled By: G. Young

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