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CLIENT: Monsanto Company
PROGRAM: Eyewitness News
DATE: 10/1/80

STATION: KSDK-TV
TIME: 6:00 p.m.
CITY: St. Louis

KAREN FOSS: "Concern about exposure to PCBs will send thirteen Granite City firefighters and two ambulance drivers to a clinic for checkups. The firefighters and drivers were exposed to several quarts of burning PCBs at an industrial fire in July. At that time, several men had complaints of mild symptoms, such as headache and nausea, even though they wore breathing masks. Now the city has made arrangements to have them examined annually to monitor their health.

"No one is sure what the long term effects of PCB exposure are, and our environmental reporter, Jennifer Blome, is here with more on that. Jen?"

JENNIFER BLOME: "Karen, the EPA estimates that one out of two Americans carries minute amounts of PCBs in his fatty tissue. PCBs are industrial chemicals. The real name--polychlorinated biphenols. They're extremely fire resistant. Monsanto was the sole producer of PCBs in this country until 1977. At that time the company stopped production because the chemicals began turning up in the environment.

"There are still PCBs around, however, in closed electrical systems, capacitors, and even florescent lights.

"PCBs accumulate in fish and animals. The molecules don't break down or dissolve, so PCBs are in the environment to stay. Laboratory studies have shown that PCBs cause cancer in animals. But Monsanto's researchers say the chemical is not cancer-causing."

JOHN CRADDOCK: "Toxic, we agree on. PCBs can cause some problems. Cancer-causing, that's a misnomer. That's totally incorrect."

JENNIFER BLOME: "Dr. Jim McEleney, who works with National Sciene Foundation, disagrees."

DR. MCELENEY: "There's (the) combined evidence that says that there is a link to cancer. So even though, indeed, at this point it could not be said from the (incident in Japan) alone that PCBs cause cancer, we take the composite of the evidence from different areas, is what has led the scientists, the International Commission to state that there is a link."

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JENNIFER BLOME: "PCBs, like many chemicals, keep turning up in the environment. In most cases, PCBs are disposed of improperly.

"What is the safest way to dispose of materials that have PCBs?"

JOHN CRADDOCK: "The best way to dispose of PCBs is high temperature incineration. The problem is is that when the Environmental Protection Agency promulgated the laws under the Toxic Substances Control Act to control the disposal of PCBs, theyincluded in the law a provision that PCBs above a certain level, above five hundred parts per million, could only be disposed of in a high temperature incinerator that was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency. The Catch-22 is there are no PCB incinerators approved in the total country."

JENNIFER BLOME: "The Food and Drug Administration has set guidelines for permissible amounts of PCBs in food, because they do concentrate in fish, milk, eggs and poultry. But scientists disagree as to whether any level is safe."