

NEWS

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MONSANTO REPORTS ON OSHA INSPECTION

ST. LOUIS, June 8 -- Monsanto Company has taken precautionary measures in one of the 35 production units at its W. G. Krummrich Plant in Sauget, Ill., following a report from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) that a contaminant was detected in the unit. The unit employs 12 people out of the plant's total of more than 1,400 employees.

In a verbal report, OSHA said that 300 parts per billion (ppb) of dioxin was found in a product sample taken last February outside the chlorophenol manufacturing unit. OSHA further indicated that over 50 percent of the dioxin detected was 2,3,7,8 tetrachlorodibenzo-para-dioxin, a highly toxic chemical substance. Monsanto's analysis of a recent product sample, using an analytical method capable of detecting dioxin down to 10 ppb, did not indicate the presence of dioxin.

OSHA also took a sample in a portion of the chlorophenol unit which has been closed for 1½ years. That sample indicated a dioxin level of 642 nanograms per square meter of surface area tested. One nanogram is equal to one-billionth of a gram. Neither of the OSHA samples are indicative of current worker exposure to dioxin.

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As a result of the OSHA findings and pending confirmation of its verbal report, Monsanto has instituted additional temporary protective measures for workers in the chlorophenol unit, including controlled access to the area and more stringent industrial hygiene practices. Monsanto is not aware of any exposure-related health problems among the employees involved.

Chlorophenols are used as intermediate chemicals in the manufacture of various products, such as dyes, agricultural chemicals and wood preservatives.

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