Monsanto

FROM (NAME & LOCATION): K. Warren Easley - Washington, D.C. - 1920

DATE : May 25, 1977

SUBJECT :

REFERENCE :

TO : John Hussey

EPA has proposed a regulation on the labeling and disposal of PCBs. This statement accompanied the proposed regulation. "While we are confident that this regulation will be effective in managing and destroying concentrated sources of PCBs," Costle said, "we face a different and extremely difficult problem in determining how to deal with the 250 million pounds of PCBs -- or one-third of that in service -- which are found in 895 million individual capacitor units widely distributed across the country.

"These PCBs are found in almost every flourescent light fixture and in many small appliances. A regulatory requirement alone is not likely to be very effective in ensuring that they are collected and transported to an incinerator for destruction. But if the assistance of the public is not achieved, these PCBs will probably find their way into the local dump or landfill and from there into the environment. EPA is seeking ideas, and assistance on ways to address this complex problem," he said.

I suggest that Monsanto may be able to develop a worthwhile idea on this end of the problem and that the idea might yield public relations benefits. One idea would be a Monsanto supported program of education beamed at appropriate audiences, including the general public, but more particularly, hardware dealers, electricians, etc., to get people to collect PCB containing articles that had failed. These then could be picked up by the Boy Scouts, perhaps, and brought to collection centers and disposed of in a safe manner. The Boy Scouts would be given a reward of so many dollars per pound, the reward to be paid by Monsanto. Perhaps fire stations could be enlisted to provide collection points.

I suggest this as just one approach. Other and more worthy ideas might be developed. All of them will present problems, of course. (Jack Anderson would say that Monsanto is exposing Boy Scouts to a cancer causing chemical. Well, we can handle that by telling people that if the component is dry, it is safe, if it is leaking, it should be placed in a plastic bag, and so on.)

We could attempt to enlist the support of equipment manufacturers, perhaps through their trade associations. Additionally, the program could be discussed during the planning stages with activist groups to incorporate their thinking. Some of them, perhaps the League of Women Voters, might even wish to participate.

What I suggest is that Public Relations, in concert with Monsanto's PCB experts, scratch their heads for ideas.

K. Warren Easley

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Attachment

P.S. Attached is a report on the proposed regulation.