POSSIBLE CUSTOMER QUESTIONS ON PCBs

PUBLICITY

No Washington Post story

QUESTION 1

What articles have appeared on the PCB problem? Will you send me copies?

ANSWER

In the U.S., ~~articles~~ newspaper articles have appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle on Feb. 24, 1969, the San Francisco Examiner on Feb. 25, 1969, and the Hartford Times on Aug. 3, 1969. Numerous articles were generated by the Wisconsin "DDT Hearings" in May, 1969. At the hearings, witnesses discussed the problem of PCBs as "interfering substances" in their search for DDT in the environment. PCBs, they said, produced peaks on a gas chromatograph similar to the peaks produced by DDT. In no case was PCB indicted at the Wisconsin hearings.

Copies of the articles will be made available on request. Regional managers should contact E. V. John, Public Relations Manager, Organic Chemicals Division, in St. Louis and copies will be forwarded to the customer through the regional manager's office.

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In addition to the newspaper articles mentioned above, there have been radio broadcasts. At the time of the San Francisco Chronicle and Examiner articles, radios in the San Francisco area also carried the story. In August, the sports editor of the Hartford Times syndicated a radio broadcast on the subject of PCBs, and in Dec., 1969, the Canadian Broadcasting Co. (radio) carried an interview they taped with a member of our medical department.

QUESTION 2

Were Monsanto's Aroclors specifically mentioned in these articles?
If so, which ones?

ANSWER

Monsanto's Aroclors were mentioned in some of the articles but only in the San Francisco Chronicle story in Feb., 1969, was Aroclor 1262 specifically mentioned by number. In several of the articles, Monsanto was also identified as the sole U.S. producer of polychlorinated biphenyls, marketed under the tradename of Aroclor. (The positive identification of ~~PCB~~ any specific PCB has not carried out.)

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QUESTION 3

What did the articles on the PCB problem say?

ANSWER

Since the outset of the "PCB problem", when the first article appeared in the U.S. press in Feb., 1969, the whole question has been closely interwoven with the question of DDT as a possible environmental contaminant.

The San Francisco Chronicle article carried a headline, "A Menacing New Pollutant." In rather sensational style, it identified PCB as a threat to birds and humans, highly toxic in a gaseous state and related to known cancer-causers. PCB presence in the environment is rising swiftly, the article stated.

The Examiner article called PCB a "plastic pollutant in the Bay and Mothers' Milk." This article called PCB an "alarming" new chemical pollutant that is playing a role in the declining peregrine falcon population, has been found in mothers' milk, and is the "latest addition to a growing list of chemicals in the ocean ---- the newest symptom of man's chemical invasion of the ocean."

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These two articles quoted Dr. Robert Risebrough, a researcher at the Institute of Marine Resources in the University of California's Department of Nutritional Scientists, on the detrimental effects of PCBs. Later Dr. Risebrough said he had been misquoted in some newspaper stories.

The Hartford Times story called PCB pollution a "new puzzle." Less sensational than the San Francisco articles, the Times gave an account of PCBs being found in the environment and the studies under way to determine their biological effects. This article, says Dr. Risebrough, tends to clear PCB of blame.

Articles generated by the Wisconsin DDT hearings generally discussed PCB as an interfering substance discovered in scientists' search for DDT in the environment. Dr. Risebrough said at the hearings that there was no proof at the moment that PCBs alone can cause thin eggshells, one of the phenomenon that he had discovered in studying the declining population of the peregrine falcon.

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