3/31/77

FYI: J. A. Alley
W. R. Corey
E. T. Mollica
R. A. Stohr
D. Wood

FROM: G. F. Barton

18 CHEMICAL WEEK March 30, 1977

Another PCB suit

The $1 billion in damages sought in a class-action suit against Monsanto and General Electric for alleged damages from pollution of Alabama waterways has been upped by over $100 million. The additional amount is being sought by Alabama's attorney general, who joined a suit filed last December by Alabama residents.

The attorney general's office says the trouble began when a GE electric transformer plant in Rome, Ga., allegedly discharged toxic polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) into the Coosa River, which flows into Alabama. Fish deaths in the river and in an adjoining lake, and a corresponding drop in commerce and tourism, prompted the suits.

Monsanto, which was sole manufacturer of PCBs, is included in the suit because, says the attorney general's office, the company "didn't adequately warn GE of the dangers of its product." But the office also conceded: "It's common to sue everyone [connected with the case] in damage suits. Later, we can sift things out."