

Monsanto

FROM (NAME & LOCATION) P. STORDEUR, LOUVAIN-LA-NEUVE

DATE May 6th, 1974.

cc R. KUP, RUABON

SUBJECT VCM - GERMANY

REFERENCE

TO : Mr LEVINSKAS, ST LOUIS

MAY 14 1974

~~EDW~~
JTG
File
Viny Chloride

As agreed, please find enclosed copies of articles from German newspapers on DYNAMIT NOBEL's problem with VCM.

Best regards.

P. STORDEUR

PS:ms

RSV 0006732

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, January 2, 1974

Summary translation (unauthorized)

Liver Damages caused by PVC Production Process

Although many hints were given, no adequate supervision took place

Similar to many other occupational diseases, one has realized only by now, 30 years after the beginning of industrial production of pvc, all dangers of the production process to the workers.

In 'Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift' (Vol. 98, page 2311), H.J. Marsteller and Susanne Jühe reported on a medical check up of chemical workers of 'Dynamit Nobel AG', Troisdorf. 45 workers of 120 employed at the pvc plant suffered from either pathologic changes of the finger ends and toe ends, or liver and milt damages.

Additionally to liver enlargements, most of the 45 workers suffered from biochemical functional liver disturbances, too. Finally, pathological tissue changes were found by the physicians.

Although pathological liver changes varied widely, all patients worked between 1.5 and 21 years in the pvc production. Therefore, this disease must be considered an occupational disease.

First reports appeared 1963 in Rumania. Only after publishing the same paper again in 1967, similar observations were published in Germany, France, Great Britain, and the U.S., too. First liver damages from pvc production process were observed in 1949 in the Soviet Union.

Scientists can make no prognosis with regard to the liver damages so far. It is not known how often this disease occurs in other pvc production plants. Maybe, the degree of danger depends on local working conditions. However, it appears that such damages were not unforeseeable, and one can raise the question why no control of the vinyl chloride concentration or the workers' health took place in such plants.

HILL AND KNOWLTON GMBH

OFFICE: Frankfurt PUBLICATION: Frankfurter Rundschau
DATE: Dec. 20, 1973 PERIODICITY: daily CIRCULATION: 185 400
MEDIA DESCRIPTION: Regional paper
SOURCE: Our press release:

Summary translation (unauthorized)

Under the headline Causes (PVC Disease) still unknown,
German ministry of labor initiates research work, this article
deals with facts concerning the 'pvc disease' and mentions
that the German ministry of labor initiates research on this
disease.

The 'Committee for dangerous Materials' of the ministry
of labor proposes regular medical check ups of all workers
in the plastics production field. Additionally, guidelines
on technical measures against dangers to health are set up.

Ursache ist noch unbekannt

Arbeitsministerium läßt Kunststoff-Krankheit erforschen

BONN, 19. Dezember (dpa). Die bisher noch nicht bekannte Ursache einer Krankheit, die offenbar mit der Herstellung von Kunststoffen (PVC) zusammenhängt, soll jetzt in einem Forschungsauftrag des Bundesarbeitsministeriums erforscht werden. Wie das Ministerium am Mittwoch mitteilte, ist in Kürze ein Sachverständigengespräch vorgesehen.

Nach bisherigen Untersuchungen in Betrieben der Kunststoffindustrie wurden bei Beschäftigten in PVC-Abteilungen geschwollene Finger, Knochenschwund, verminderte Blutgerinnungsfähigkeit, chronische Leberschädigungen sowie Schwindelgefühl und Kopfschmerzen festgestellt.

Der Kunststoff PVC entsteht durch die Verflüssigung des farblosen, aus Erdöl gewonnenen Vinylchloridgases in großen Kesseln und die anschließende Komprimierung zu Pulver. Aus dem Pulver wird dann der zähe Kunststoff gewonnen, der praktisch schon in allen Lebensbereichen zu einer Alltagsplastik geworden ist.

Der beim Bundesarbeitsministerium bestehende Ausschuss für gefährliche Arbeitsstoffe hält regelmäßige ärztliche Untersuchungen von Arbeitnehmern für erforderlich, die im Bereich der Kunststoffherstellung beschäftigt sind. Ferner wird eine Richtlinie über technische Maßnahmen zur Abwehr von Gesundheitsgefahren aufgestellt.

HILL AND KNOWLTON GMBH

OFFICES Frankfurt PUBLICATION:.....Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.....

DATE:Jan.:9, 1974 PERIODICITY:.....daily..... CIRCULATION:.....336 800.....

MEDIA DESCRIPTION:.....National paper.....

SOURCE: Our press release:

This article deals with another pvc phenomenon which occurs with finished pvc foils.

Translation (unauthorized)

PVC Vapor causes Asthma

PVC vapor resulting from heat treatment and decompensation of poly vinyl chloride leads to asthma and pathologic changes of the lungs. Such damages were first reported by W.N. Sokol of the Medical Clinic of the Harbor General Hospital, Torrance (California). In the 'Journal' of the American Medical Association (pages 226/635), Sokol reports on the poisonings of three women who worked as packers in the meat department of a supermarket. They suffered from such diseases, after the supermarket started to use pvc packaging material. PVC foils were cut with a hot wire. Cases resulting from this heat treatment are quite dangerous, as it was found. While the pvc producer says that such gases are not dangerous, Sokol expects that such poisonings happen quite often.

Asthma durch
PVC-Dämpfe

Die bei der Hitzersetzung von Polyvinylchlorid (PVC) auftretenden Dämpfe führen zu Asthma und Lungenveränderungen. Über derartige Schäden hat jetzt erstmals W. N. Sokol von der Medizinischen Klinik des Harbor General Hospital in Torrance/Kalifornien hingewiesen. Sokol berichtet im „Journal“ der Amerikanischen Medizinischen Gesellschaft (226/S. 635) über Vergiftungen bei 3 Packerinnen, die in der Fleischabteilung eines Supermarktes beschäftigt waren. Die Beschwerden traten auf, nachdem auf PVC als Verpackungsmaterial übergegangen worden war. Die Folien werden mit einem heißen Druht zurechtgeschnitten. Die dabei entstehenden Gase sind, wie diese Untersuchungen zeigen, offensichtlich recht gefährlich. Wäh-

RSV 0006735

HILL AND KNOWLTON GMBH

OFFICE: Frankfurt PUBLICATION:.....Frankfurter Rundschau
DATE: Dec. 18, 1973 PERIODICITY:.....daily CIRCULATION:.....185,000
MEDIA DESCRIPTION:.....Regional paper
SOURCE: Our press release:

Summary Translation

Horrible Occupational Disease

Under this headline the paper reports on the 'pvc disease'. It is mentioned that Farbwerke Hoechst and BASF have stated that they have not yet found such disease in their area.

The German ministry of labor was approached to legally acknowledge this disease as occupational disease. No negotiations took place so far with regard to compensations for the workers.

Workers of the chemical plant at Troisdorf say that they feel to have been used as 'test persons' by the employer. The spokesman of the plant at Troisdorf stated that 'nobody died' so far, and all care have been given to the workers. The plant's spokesman pronounced doubts with regard to other statements that this pvc disease should not have occurred at other pvc production plants.

Grauenhafte Berufskrankheit

40 Chemie-Arbeitern droht Invalidität und Siechtum

Von unserem Mitarbeiter

jhw BONN, 17. Dezember. Eine grauenhafte neue Berufskrankheit bedroht die Arbeiter an den unmittelbar PVC-produzierenden Autoklaven in den großen Chemiewerken. Während die Farbwerke Hoechst und BASF am Wochenende betonten, Erkrankungen seien bisher aber nicht festgestellt worden, sollen mindestens 40 Beschäftigte der Dynamit Nobel AG in Troisdorf durch gefährliche Vinylchlorid-Gase geschädigt worden sein. Den Betroffenen stellte jedenfalls der Bonner Hautarzt Professor Günter Veltmann eine „ernste Prognose“. Die Sterblichkeit infolge PVC-Gasvergiftungen sei „relativ hoch“ und treffe vor allem junge Männer.

Die furchtbaren Wirkungen ausströmenden Gases: Die Knochen in den Händen weichen auf, Leber und Milz vergrößern sich. Das blutbildende System und die Blutgerinnung werden schwer beeinträchtigt, die Lunge erheblich in Mitleidenschaft gezogen. Das Atmen fällt dem Gasvergifteten immer schwerer, in der Speiseröhre können sich Krampfkrämpfe bilden.

Bis vor kurzem war die Berufskrank-

Nach den alarmierenden Meldungen der Ärzte hat Bundesgesundheitsminister Arendt einen Sonderausschuss gebildet, der den Fall untersuchen soll. Die Vergiftung soll als Berufskrankheit schnellstens anerkannt werden, damit die Opfer zunächst die Invalidenrente erhalten können. Über Entschädigungen werden noch keine Verhandlungen geführt.

Unterdessen erhoben Arbeiter des

39-jähriger Arbeiter, seit eineinhalb Jahren krank, leidet an aufgedunsenen Händen und Füßen, aus denen jedes Gefühl gewichen ist. Besonders unter den Angehörigen der 160 an den Troisdorfer Autoklaven beschäftigten Arbeiter macht sich große Unruhe bemerkbar. Die Dynamit Nobel AG erklärte, bis jetzt sei „niemand gestorben“. Man habe alle Fürsorge für die Arbeiter walten lassen.

RSV 0006736

HILL AND KNOWLTON GMBH

OFFICE: Frankfurt PUBLICATION:..... Die Welt
DATE: Dec. 20, 1973 PERIODICITY:..... daily..... CIRCULATION: 286,200
MEDIA DESCRIPTION:..... National paper
SOURCE: Our press release:

Summary translation (unauthorized)

Research on PVC Disease

The up to now unknown reason for a certain disease which occurs in connection with the pvc production process will be investigated under a research contract of the German ministry of labor.

According to what is known so far, workers in the pvc departments of the plastics industry suffer from swollen fingers, atrophy of bones, reduced blood coagulation, chronic liver damages, giddiness, and headache.

It is reported that in December 1973, 40 workers of a chemical plant at Troisdorf, Federal Republic of Germany, who had contact with vinyl chloride gas, had suffered serious damages.

**PVC-Krankheit
wird erforscht**

Bonn (dpa) — Die bisher noch nicht bekannte Ursache einer Krankheit, die offenbar mit der Herstellung des Kunststoffes PVC zusammenhängt, soll jetzt in einem Forschungsauftrag des Bundesgesundheitsministeriums ermittelt werden.

Nach bisherigen Untersuchungen in Betrieben der Kunststoffindustrie wurden bei Beschäftigten in PVC-Abteilungen geschwollene Finger, Knochenschwund, verminderte Blutgerinnungsfähigkeit, chronische Leberschädigungen sowie Schwindelgefühl und Kopfschmerzen festgestellt. PVC entsteht durch die Verflüssigung des farblosen, aus Erdöl gewonnenen Vinylchloridgases und die anschließende Komprimierung zu Pulver. Aus dem Pulver wird dann der zähe Kunststoff gewonnen, der praktisch schon in allen Lebensbereichen zu einer Alltagsplastik geworden ist.

Erst Anfang der Woche hatten 40 Beschäftigte eines Troisdorfer Be-

RSV 0006737

pure ~~copy~~ *signature* *Karl* *cc. HAN*
 MAY 29 1974
 Hill and Knowlton International Belgium S.A.

Office : Brussels
 Publication(s) : Industry and Society
 Country : Belgium
 Date : April 30, 1974
 Circulation :

• Levenshine St. Louis
 • Kup - Rabon
 • Kovacs. Paris
 • P. R. Grafan. St. Louis
 • toxicity file
 • G. F. Clegg
 • Pisco del S.A.
 Spain

Media description : Weekly of
 European Communities (Industrial
 information)

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 EPW

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** Several years ago the European Commission recommended that, in order to improve the prevention of OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES, the Member States of the Community of the Six should exchange their information on occupational diseases on a regular basis and adapt their national lists to the European list of these diseases. A study covering the legislation in force in this field in Denmark, Ireland and Great Britain is now being prepared. The European Commission recalls this point in its reply to a written question by a member of the European Parliament concerning Commission action to protect the health of workers employed in the manufacture and processing of plastics based on polyvinyl chloride which expose them to specially serious health hazards. In order to achieve more complete understanding of the harmful effects of this product (already referred to in the European list of occupational diseases), the European Commission has established contact with the International Agency for Research on Cancer of Lyons, an organization which is collecting all available data on the toxicity of vinyl chloride and polyvinyl chlorides. As soon as possible the Commission will take action on the latest scientific data available on the subject.

I LUNDQVIST

SWEDEN

TRANSLATION

1974.05.15

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PVC-stop - death blow for the plastics industry

How dangerous is it to work in a factory that produces PVC as raw material? Are there any secure limit values?

The National American Workers' Protection Board says no and demands a prohibition against the discharge of the toxic vinyl chloride in the working environment.

This decision could mean a death blow for many plastics industries all over the world.

The vinyl chloride, which is the gaseous raw material for PVC and which comes from oil can cause an unusual liver cancer if the fumes of the vinyl chloride are inhaled. The person, who is exposed to the fumes can get his hands destroyed. See picture.

At least about 15 workers at different PVC factories all around the world have died of liver cancer. Two of them worked in Stockvik (Kema Nord).

In almost thirty years the PVC workers have been exposed to large doses of vinyl chloride.

One month ago the American legislation concerning workers' protection reduced the highest permitted limit value to 50 ppm and on Thursday last week the same authority demanded a prohibition.

This proposal will be looked into by a federal court-of-law next month. The American legislation can assert that also small quantities of vinyl chloride are dangerous and if the proposal gains legal force the production of PVC must be stopped.

Four large plastics industries in England have invested 40 million Sw Cr in order to reduce the discharge of vinyl chloride to 25 ppm during the coming six months.

RSV 0006739

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SWEDEN

1974.05.15

But to come down to zero is probably not possible with the technique of today. "Even though we invest many million £ we do not come below 10 ppm", says Barry Barnes, who is active also at the ICI-trust.