

THIRD DRAFT
FC-143 Decatur
Standby Press Statement
April 15, 1981
Lowell Ludford (3-6154)

fax to Jim Matthews
Press Release
C O N F I D E N T I A L

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HOLD FOR RELEASE

As a precautionary measure, approximately 25 women of childbearing potential have received job reassignments at the 3M Decatur plant this week so they will not be exposed to a type of fluorochemical that can cause birth defects in rats.

Preliminary results of a recent 3M toxicology study showed that three related fluorochemicals affected eye development in the fetuses of rats, according to Phil Rath, manager of the Chemical Resources Division plant.

The study currently is being repeated on rats and other species to clarify the initial finding, Rath explained. Until these results are known and evaluated, he said the 3M Medical Department felt it was prudent to recommend this action.

The women are being reassigned to jobs in the adjacent 3M Film and Allied Products Division plant. This is being done in an equitable way that will protect their present seniority status, benefits and pay, Rath pointed out.

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"While we are not aware of any adverse health effects on our men and women employees," Raths said, "we are transferring these women as a precautionary step pending further tests."

The three fluorochemicals are used in the manufacture of specialty chemicals by 3M and various other industrial firms.

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