Monsanto

FROM (NAME—LOCATION—PHONE): John H. Craddock - St. Louis A2SA 4-4764

DATE: March 12, 1981

SUBJECT: PCB'S - MAJOR NEW YORK ISSUES - STATUS REPORT

REFERENCE:

cc: D. R. Bishop - A3NB
R. S. Nelson - A2SA
J. R. G. Ortiz - E2NE
B. J. Wander - G3WG

TO: C. F. Callis - B3CA
M. C. Throdahl - D1D

The two PCB incidents in New York State in February continue to have extremely high press and media visibility within New York and across the nation.

Transformer Fire

The transformer fire occurred after hours in a 17-story State office building involving about 100 gallons of transformer fluid, 50% PCB - 50% trichlorobenzene.

No injuries occurred. The fire was contained and did little physical damage. However, a faulty ventilation system circulated soot throughout the entire building.

After the PCB toxicity scare dissipated, new reports of two other "deadly toxins", dioxins and polychlorinated dibenzofurans (PCDBF's) appeared in the press and on TV.

The situation is highly politically motivated now with even Governor Carey taking a stand on the relative toxicity and safety of PCB's. (Governor Carey offered to drink a glass of PCB's and help vacuum the building to clean it up.)

Presently, local Broome County (Binghamton), New York, and New York State Department of Public Health officials are squabbling about who knows more about PCB and dioxin/PCDBF health hazards, etc.

A big question is: How good are the analytical numbers being tossed about? And even more important: What is the significance of these results if they are accurate? "Experts" from all over are being interviewed, including Dr. Renate Kimbrough of CDC and Dr. James Allen of the University of Wisconsin (formerly).

The local New York media is having a field day. I spoke for over 30 minutes Tuesday, March 10, to Bill Schmidt of the NEW YORK TIMES about this subject and Wednesday, March 11, Dan Bishop was contacted by ABC-TV (New York City) "20-20" program.

I learned late yesterday from Don Dahm that MRC had received wipe samples from New York State officials to be analyzed for PCB and dioxins. (No PCDBF analyses were requested.) These will be handled as all standard contract analyses according to GLP. In the recent past certain early analytical reports of dioxins and PCDBF's from this fire were attributed to General Electric Company chemists. However GE is trying to maintain a low profile and get out of the middle of this incident.

0711574

IN - 10 (REV. 8/77)

PCB-ARCH0755394

In addition, Dr. Don Coleman of DMEH has been invited to address a unit of the Upstate New York Medical Society to discuss PCB's from a health, toxicity and clinical examination perspective in late March. We agree that this could have beneficial effects in attempting to defuse this situation.

However, Dr. Coleman is aware of the dioxin/PCDBF implications and will attempt to keep from being sandbagged with these issues, particularly non-medical aspects.

Natural Gas Line Contamination

PCB's were detected in natural gas pipelines and meters in Long Island in early February. In condensate in meters concentrations as high as 2000-3000 ppm were detected. (The condensate occurred as a result of a number of factors, all happening at the same time, i.e., very cold weather, high gas velocities (flow rates) in the system and high concentrations of high-molecular weight hydrocarbons in the gas -- C4 to C9's.)

Since the first discovery on Long Island, gas transmission lines all across the country have been sampled and found to contain trace levels of PCB's as contaminants. Levels in the vapor in pipelines are of the order of 1 ppb or less. Samples in residences in Long Island of 0.04 ppb or less have been identified.

The media, government and health officials reaction to this incident has tempered significantly over the past months. All responsible sources have publicly stated that there is no health hazard. Programs to sample, identify and remove contaminants are being developed. However, in the past week the PCDBF issue has emerged here and sampling programs will be modified to include analyses for this possible co-contaminant.

J. H. Craddock

jb