

Monsanto

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SUBJECT : Weekly Highlights - PCBs

REFERENCE :

TO : W. B. Papageorge

- The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) completed a three day conference on Potential Health Effects of PCBs and Related Persistent Halogenated Hydrocarbons. Thirty-one technical papers were presented by thirty-three leading world scientists. Many papers classified PCBs as being similar to and causing the same adverse animal health effects as PCBs, TCDDs and PCDFs. In several cases authors implied similar human effects.

However, a major "finding" of the conference was that a causal-effect relationship between PCBs and chronic human health problems (except chloracne) has not been established (yet).

A significant number of new PCB and "related" chemical health effects studies were described indicating a resurgence of research into this area. NIEHS staff indicated funding is available for proposals.

- In addition, an international conference on PCBs focusing on occupational hazards caused by PCBs and chlorobenzenes in electrical transformers and capacitors opened this week in Helsinki, Finland. Many of the participants were also part of the recent NIEHS conference.
- Some media attention has again focused on the electrical fire contaminant issue as a result of these recent conferences (ABC-TV Nitely News).
- EPA Enforcement Division published several PCB policy statements and their interpretation for enforcement actions. The agency intends to interpret these policies in the strictest sense. No court challenge has been filed because of these policies - yet - but probably in the offing.


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