

Medical Department

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Toxicity Statement on PCB

John Mason
JMASO

Bill tells me you want a brief statement on the toxicity of PCB's to be included in comments made at a seminar to be held next month in Massachusetts.

I suggest the following:

"At the end of twelve months of two-year feeding studies in rats and dogs, the three compounds under investigation (biphenyl chlorinated to the extent of 42%, 54% and 60% respectively) appear to be at about the same order of toxicity as DDT in rats and dogs. This is reassuring in that DDT is probably the least toxic insecticide to mammalian species. Further, there is general agreement that DDT has not presented a hazard in animals or man in spite of its presence in the environment."

Bill thought you might object to the comparison of DDT but it is the material which is similar in the types of tests being done. I don't know off-hand of any industrial chemicals that would be familiar to the majority of people that I expect would attend the seminar and would also produce effects in animals at the same levels in feedings.

If you want the statement amplified to get into the "parts per million in the diet, etc.", I can do it but I think it depends on who is going to present the statement as to whether or not the details need to be included.

An after-thought--will whoever uses the information point out that the appropriate governmental agency, such as the U. S. Food and Drug Administration, have been given interim or progress reports on the studies referred to above?

Elmer P. Wheeler

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