

41-119 SCIENCE NEWS  
WKLY. 110,500

SEP 19 1970

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### PCB's insulate

I am taking the liberty of writing to correct a statement which appears in the item "Monsanto reduces sales" (SN: 7/25, p. 69): "Monsanto will continue to sell PBC's for use as a lubricant in transformers and for paints and adhesives, the company said."

Polychlorinated biphenyls, known under the generic name of askarels, as well as by various trade names, are not used as lubricants but as insulating liquids. These compounds are used for various reasons but especially because they are nonflammable, whereas petroleum-base insulating oils will, of course, burn.

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OCT 4 1970

News of Tennessee's . . .

## FIELDS AND STREAMS

By Dan Cook

### Pollution 'Score'

Although pollution is one of the most serious issues of the day, maybe they should set up a football-type scoreboard for it.

Make the score 12-6, polluters ahead.

Our side, Public, scored when the Monsanto Company, only U.S. producer of a group of environmentally persistent chemicals known to chemists as polychlorinated biphenyls, announced it is restricting production and tightening controls over their handling and disposal.

PCB's, as they are called for short, have been in use for more than 40 years and have been showing up with alarming regularity in tests on wildlife. In the tests, PCB's were confused for some time with DDT. The two resemble in their chemical structure.

The public outcry led to Monsanto's action. It is commendable.

#### DAN COOK

This chemical will no longer be used in "open systems." These are described as adhesives, sealants, chlorinated rubber, specialty paints and other similar items. It will be limited to "closed systems" such as electrical transformers and capacitors.

In this look at pollution on the national scene, however, the Polluters still hold the lead on the basis of findings in the Mississippi River.

Other pollution cases still unchecked are numerous.

The testimony presented on Aug. 26-27 before the Senate Subcommittee on Energy, Natural Resources and Environment, a group chaired by Michigan Senator Phillip A. Hart, indicates there's plenty battle room for congressional heroes in the war on pollution.

The testimony tends to erase any belief that mercury contamination of our lakes and streams was a mere fluke. It erases the thought that this was an isolated case of one metal by-product which happened to slip out the back door of industry.

Toxic substances such as lead and arsenic were discovered dumped into the Mississippi.

### Lead Found

Conservation News, an educational service of the National Wildlife Federation which reported the congressional proceedings, labels it an "I'll-do-it-until-you-stop-me" attitude.

Almost 2½ tons of lead is being discharged daily into the lower Mississippi between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, according to the report.

The Interior Department's Federal Water Quality Administration officials have named the Ethyl Corporation (producer of gasoline lead additives) as the leading polluter with lead. Other firms have been indicted.

Dr. Harry Schroeder, professor of physiology of Dartmouth Medical School, expressed the serious nature of toxic metal pollution.

"I must emphasize," he said, "that environmental pollution by toxic metals is a much more serious and much more insidious problem—pollution by organic substances such as pesticides, weed killers, sulfur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen, carbon monoxide and other gross contaminants of air and water.

"The importance of this problem is illustrated by the fact that rats and mice spending their lives in an environment controlled as to metallic contamination live 20-25 per cent longer than do animals in the contaminated environment of the usual

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