PCB

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DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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December 14, 1976

Mr. C. J. Pugsley
419 North Park Street
Fairmont, Minnesota 56031

Dear Mr. Pugsley:

I am replying to your letter of November 15 in which you question whether your use of a transformer oil could have any possible effect on your hypertension. I assume you are referring to the dielectric fluid which is used as an insulating fluid in many transformers. To begin, hypertension is characterized by being variable from one time to another and this variability has not been explained. Second, not all dielectric fluids contain PCB's.

The following comments are based on the assumption that the oil you have been using does contain PCB's. A great deal of study has been done on the PCB's to determine the biological properties of these chemicals. In addition, we have seen workers who have produced these chemicals over a long period of time. Both the experimental studies and the occupational experience would not suggest that they would have any relationship to hypertension. As a matter of fact, based on my understanding of hypertension, I would not expect there to be a relationship.

And, finally, since the PCB's have a low vapor pressure, I would not suspect that you would have a very significant exposure to the chemicals or, to make the statement positive, I would suspect your exposure to the PCB's is quite small.

In summary, I believe that I can reassure you that your use of transformer oils, and, more particularly, the PCB's, would not have any relation to your hypertension. I should also point out that dielectric fluids, used as insulating fluids in transformers, which contain PCB's are intended only for that specific use.

I hope this satisfactorily answers your question.

Sincerely,

George Roush, Jr., M. D.
Medical Director

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