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U.S. EPA INCLUDES MONSANTO IN OMC CLEAN-UP

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has included the Monsanto Company as being responsible for the removal of highly toxic chemicals at the outboard Marine Corp. Waukegan facility.

In an amended complaint filed today in U.S. District Court, the EPA charged that Monsanto knew the outboard engine manufacturer discharged polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) into Lake Michigan and Waukegan harbor.

This was the first suit filed against a manufacturer of toxic chemicals under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.

The complaint sought a halt to further contamination and a clean up by both firms of PCB-laden sediment in the lake, harbor and on OMC property.

The complaint charged that Monsanto, the sole supplier of PCBs in the nation, knew OMC discharged PCBs and continued to sell it hydraulic fluids containing the chemical between 1959 and 1972. MONS 012898

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According to the complaint, OMC discharges have "...resulted in extreme contamination of bottom sediments in the north ditch and in portions of Waukegan harbor and its tributaries." PCBs comprise up to 25 per cent of the sediment in some places.

Fines of $10,000 a day dating back to Oct. 18, 1972 from OMC were also requested.

The original suit was filed Mar. 17, 1978.

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