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CLIENT: The Monsanto Company
STATION: KBTV 9 TV
PROGRAM: Nine News
TIME: 5:10 P.M.
DATE: October 11, 1979
CITY: Denver

REPORTER: "Another development in the PCB story. The Boulder County health department tested soil in the Marshall landfill this afternoon for PCB levels. Two PCB drums from the Darling farm were dumped in that landfill last year. Marie Darling is the woman whose breast milk was at above acceptable PCB levels. Boulder County wants to find out if the chemical was washed into an adjoining ditch. Results should be back from the EPA within a few weeks. PCB was banned from manufacture the first of this year by the EPA, but it was actually banned from manufacture in 1976. But it is still being used despite its cancer-causing properties. Paula Woodward and photographer Bob Toos examine the problem in Colorado. Here's their report:"

REPORTER PAULA WOODWARD: "This is it: Polychlorinated Biphenyls, better known as PCB. It's an oily liquid used in electrical transformers; it can be dangerous to you if you eat it; it can be absorbed through your skin if you even inhale it, and it can kill. 1977: Green Bay, Wisconsin: PCB is flushed into the Great Lakes; game fish are contaminated. Sale and distribution are restricted, consumers warned of eating lake fish. This month in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming: chickens slaughtered after being fed feed contaminated by PCB. The chickens and the eggs slated for the marketplace; only a spot check by the FDA prevented that. And in Provo, Utah: mink on a mink farm die at the rate of 20 a day after being fed parts from the chickens contaminated with PCB."

EPA SPOKESMAN BOB HARDING: "There is a background level in almost everyone in the country."

REPORTER PAULA WOODWARD: "Is that normal or have we gotten it through the environment?"

EPA SPOKESMAN BOB HARDING: "It comes through the environment; PCB is not a naturally occurring substance; it's synthesized."

REPORTER PAULA WOODWARD: "But some people get more exposure than others. May, 1978, an explosion and fire in an underground concrete vault in the United Bank of Denver; three Public Service men are injured; PCB is splattered on their bodies. Today, the most critically injured, Andy Anderson, is back on the job. At the time of the fire his concern was getting out of the vault. Now PCB is on his mind."

PUBLIC SERVICE WORKER ANDY ANDERSON: "All I know is about myself; I'm okay now, as far as I know--no ill effects, let's put it that way."

EPA SPOKESMAN BOB HARDING: "The first reaction normally is chloracne, which is a specific skin disease; then hyperpigmentation, and then other abnormalities, like liver dysfunction and so forth."

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REPORTER PAULA WOODWARD: "It's in you and me; yet it shouldn't be. It was first manufactured in 1929."

EPA SPOKESMAN BOB HARDING: "PCBs are very persistent in the environment. They bio-accumulate in the food chain."

REPORTER PAULA WOODWARD: "The only way to destroy PCB is to heat it to 2000 degrees. There are no incinerators approved by the EPA yet, but they say it's only a matter of time. So PCB is stored in EPA-approved dumps: none in Colorado. Public Service Company, which uses PCB in its transformers, ships it to Idaho in steel drums. The EPA says they're understaffed to handle the PCB problem; they regulate it, but have more questions than answers."

REPORTER PAULA WOODWARD: "How much PCB is here in Colorado?"

EPA SPOKESMAN BOB HARDING: "I don't know--I don't even want to guess."

REPORTER PAULA WOODWARD: "Paula Woodward, Nine News."