

W. B. Papageorge - General Offices, B2NA

March 28, 1973

H. S. Bergen

W. R. Corey

TRANSFORMER FLUID SPILL -
KINGSTON, TENNESSEE

Mr. J. F. Stapleton
B2SA

On or about March 16, Paul Benignus received calls from Mr. Robert Ostoph, General Electric Company, Pittsfield, Massachusetts and Mr. James Kinney, General Electric Company, Rome, Georgia who informed him that a truck delivering a transformer from Rome, Georgia to a customer was detained by officials in the Kingston, Tennessee area because of a serious leakage of fluid from the transformer onto the highway. The driver was informed he could not proceed until he had drained the fluid. The driver then proceeded to release the fluid to the ground adjacent to the roadway. We are informed by the General Electric representatives that this fluid contains PCBs.

Following the release of the fluid severe rainstorms occurred in the area and the resulting surface waters apparently distributed the oil over a larger area. General Electric eventually made arrangements for the physical removal of the soil which was obviously contaminated and we are told that this soil will be shipped to Texas for disposal. Local National Guard units were also employed to manually remove the contaminated soil and place it in steel containers.

It appears that the decontamination activity, along with a lack of understanding of what PCBs are, has resulted in a serious emotional problem with the people in the general area. One dairy farmer is disposing of milk, although laboratory tests indicate no presence of PCBs. An operator of a mallard duck farm is claiming he is experiencing thin eggshells. The deaths of two chickens are being contributed to PCB exposure. The people in the community are extremely concerned and are not getting appropriate information from the Sheriff's office or the county public health officials.

The Environmental Protection Administration's regional office in Atlanta, Georgia has been involved and through Mr. Denny Dobbs has repeatedly requested that General Electric representatives discuss PCBs at town meetings and with state regulatory representatives. Mr. Ostoph

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and Mr. Kinney have both requested that Monsanto be present at these discussions. We have informed them that because of the nature of the problem we were considering their request and would inform them of our decision. Both Mr. Ostoph and Mr. Kinney have repeated this request several times during the past two weeks. On Tuesday, March 27, Mr. Denny Dobbs informed General Electric that they were expected to be present at a meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 29, in Knoxville, Tennessee to review the total situation. Participants in this meeting were expected to be the following: Mr. Don Owens and Mr. Earl Leming from the Tennessee Water Quality Control Division; Mr. Eugene Holman, the Director of the Food and Drug Division of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture; Mr. Denny Dobbs, E.P.A., Atlanta, Georgia; and Mr. Thomas Nickels and Mr. James Kinney, General Electric Company, Rome, Georgia. The meeting is to be held in the Westwood Building, 5616 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Mr. Ostoph and Mr. Mike Dobbins, Attorney, General Electric Company, Pittsfield, Massachusetts are meeting on Wednesday, March 28 in Knoxville, Tennessee to prepare for the meeting scheduled the following day.

On Wednesday, March 28, I was requested by Mr. Kinney that Monsanto should not discuss this incident with upper management within the General Electric organization because the matter was being managed only within their Transformer Division.

W. B. Papageorge

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cc: Mr. L. P. MacFarland
Attorney at Law
Columbia, Tennessee

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