bcc: W. Papageorge
J. Mason

Monsanto

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

Monsanto Company
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Phone: (314) 694-1000

July 21, 1970

Mrs. J. A. Johnston Jr.
306 N. 13th
Durant, Oklahoma 74701

Dear Mrs. Johnston:

Thank you for writing us expressing your concern about the PCB issue. Unfortunately, your reaction to recent press coverage of the subject is probably similar to that of many individual citizens. That is why we have attempted for several months to supply the press with facts concerning PCB and the responsible actions Monsanto has voluntarily taken to control use of the product.

I, too, read reports that PCB has been linked to birth defects in animals. These reports are completely untrue. Early articles said that scientists were studying the "possibility" that PCB might affect the reproductive cycle of certain species of birds and fish. The press, in its attempt to over-generalize and over-simplify, perpetuated this statement to "mounting evidence shows that PCB can induce birth defects in animals."

I can assure you that we are not aware of any scientific data of this sort. We have sponsored comprehensive toxicity studies which have failed to produce such results. There is absolutely no scientific justification at this time for relating PCB to birth defects.

I'm sure it is equally important to you as a consumer to know that PCB is not a "household item", as has been reported. At one time we did offer the product for use in very specialized industrial uses, such as adhesives, sealants, corrosion

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resistant paints, etc. I'm sure you would not normally have bought these products for use around your home. We have withdrawn PCB from these uses by offering manufacturers alternate products or refusing to sell PCB for uses which escape to the environment. Therefore, to print a list of "brand name" products which supposedly contained PCB at one time would only cause undue alarm.

Enclosed is a copy of a news release we issued to the press last week. I believe it represents the other side of the PCB story which has not been reported to date. Since this possible environmental threat came to our attention over two years ago, we have spent many hours and considerable sums of money to solve the problem voluntarily.

Hopefully, after viewing the matter in perspective, you and other good Monsanto customers in Durant will believe, as we do, that our actions have been those of a responsible company acting to protect both human lives and the environment which we share.

Sincerely,

E. N. John

Edward N. John
Public Relations Manager
Organic Chemicals Division

/stw

Enclosure

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