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Monsanto May Cut Out PCB Production

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Monsanto Co. has announced it intends to phase out the production of chemical polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which have been termed a significant health hazard by the Environmental Protection Agency.

In making the announcement Monday, F. J. Fitzgerald, managing director of Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Co., said it was too early to put an exact timetable on the phaseout but that it would take place in "a planned and orderly manner."

PCBs, the fire-resistant chemicals used mainly as insulating fluids in electrical equipment such as high-power transformers, have been shown to cause reproductive failures, gastric disorders and skin lesions in mammals.

Russell E. Train, the EPA administrator, said last month that PCBs should be effectively controlled "with every means at our disposal."

Monsanto is the only American manufacturer of PCBs, producing about 40 million annually at its Sauget, Ill., plant on the Mississippi River. The agency has listed 37 other plants where the chemical is used in the manufacture of transformers or capacitators.

According to Fitzgerald, Monsanto will voluntarily shut down its PCB manufacturing unit "as soon as we are satisfied that the electrical power supply industries' needs for usable, acceptable alternate dielectric fluids have been met..."

He noted that Monsanto began reducing production before a federal task force study on PCBs was completed in 1972.

Since then, he said, Monsanto has installed special high-temperature incinerators which completely destroy waste PCBs by burning them at extremely high temperatures.

The EPA has estimated that 700 million pounds of the virtually indestructable PCBs have been produced in the United States since 1931. It said last month that about 300 million pounds were in use, with most of the remainder dumped into land fills, leached into water or allowed to sift into production sites or in lake or river bottoms.

Train said PCB levels above those allowed by the Food and Drug Administration have been found in fish from the Great Lakes, the Hudson River, the upper Mississippi and off the southern California coast.



trailer truck Tuesday. The ... now being delivered. (Dail... Staff Photo)

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...r hearing, ... magistrate ...on McAn... ...ified that ...lmer and ...me, then ... St., last ... invited to ... and, later ... drugs. ...gents said

for the misdemeanor possession charge.

Their undercover work, the agents said, also showed that Palmer apparently dealt in marijuana in larger amounts than expected, referring to his claims that his supplies of marijuana were "reliable" despite the drug crackdowns in the area. Palmer told undercover agents he was preparing to break down another pound of marijuana, which he could obtain for $140, and have it ready for the street in two days.

On the same occasion, the agents said at the hearing, Palmer said he had some "pharmaceutical drugs," later identified as liquid codeine, which the agents said he claimed would ... by "shooting

"couple of ... the next bat... woods.

Palmer was ... home at a Ka... where he had ... first contacts ... on December ... charging him ... possession cou...

Last year, ... of several per... "police harras... rests made a ... festival" in P... tacting The D... issue statemen... brutality he cl... ty authorities ... over 30 persc... drug possessio...

Palmer told ... Staff Writer ... ing the interv...

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