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By Kline

Safety Laws Call For PCB Use, Monsanto Says

The Monsanto Co., which last week announced it would continue selling the controversial chemical polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), called a major pollution threat, pointed out Monday that public safety laws throughout the country require use of PCB in certain electric power equipment.

"Earlier transformer coolants often exploded and burned, causing numerous deaths and injuries," Howard L. Minckler, company vice president and general manager of the organic chemicals division, said.

IN ADDITION, he said, there are no available substitutes which equal the safety performance of PCB in power-transmission equipment.

"A return to use of combustible oil products would be a retreat to practices of the 1930s and an unnecessary threat to human life," Minckler said.

"Monsanto has voluntarily taken action to restrict use of this product and to prevent further environmental exposure. We believe this is the best approach we can take until a replacement for PCB is found by our research people."

HEAVY EXPOSURE of human beings to PCB can cause liver and kidney diseases, and even death, according to Environment magazine.

Commenting on a recent report that PCB can induce birth defects in animals, Minckler said, "Monsanto is not aware of any scientific data that indicates polychlorinated biphenyl may cause birth defects."

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Company Limits Sale of Chemical

WASHINGTON, July 14 — The manufacturer of an industrial chemical called PCB has decided to restrict sales of the chemical because of mounting evidence that it can induce birth defects in animals.

The Monsanto Co. of St. Louis said in a letter to Rep. William F. Ryan, D-N.Y., that it would no longer sell PCB for use as a water-resistant plasticizer or as a hydraulic fluid.

In April, the company asked the Department of Agriculture to prohibit the use of the chemical in pesticides.

Monsanto said it would con-

tinue to manufacture the chemical for use as a coolant in electrical transformers because of its "unique properties" and because its emission into the environment could be controlled in a "closed system" such as a transformer.

There have been increasing scientific reports in recent years that PCB was being found in fish, birds, fruits and even, in miniscule quantities, in human mothers' milk. There is evidence that large doses affected the enzymes, and thus sex hormones, in certain animals.

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