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Health concern caused phase-out of chemical

ST. LOUIS (UPI) — Monsanto Co., the nation's leading supplier of polychlorinated biphenyl, used as an electric insulator, said Tuesday it would stop production of the chemical by Oct. 31, 1977, because of possible hazardous effects on humans.

Monsanto said the phasing out of production over the next year would give time for manufacturers to find substitute materials for PCB. Substitutes developed by the electrical industry are being tested, although they may not prove as effective in resisting fire as PCB.

The Environmental Protection Agency, which had called polychlorinated biphenyl

amination," said EPA Administrator Russell E. Train.

"Environmental contamination will continue to be a problem due to the millions of PCBs already in landfills, soils, river and lake sedi-

ments, in our air and water and in wildlife and human tissue. This contamination will be there for years—moving into life systems, including humans."

Monsanto said last January it would eventually stop

production of PCB but no date was set. Polychlorinated biphenyl has been used since about 1850 as fire-resistant fluids and electric insulating in capacitors and transformers.

Monsanto once made as

much as 85 million pounds of PCB a year, but that production has dropped to about 27,000 pounds in recent years as fears about environmental damage mounted.

Monsanto also makes PCB at a plant in England.

(PCB) a "significant hazard to human health and the environment," welcomed the news of Monsanto's decision.

"The Monsanto decision is a significant step in dealing with the total problem of PCB con-