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NEWS

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Monsanto

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MONSANTO INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS COMPANY

DRAFT VI -- NOT FOR RELEASE

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MONSANTO RELEASES PCB
PRODUCTION FIGURES TO
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

WASHINGTON, D.C., Nov. 30 -- Monsanto Company announced today it has released figures to the United States Department of Commerce showing the company's U.S. production and sales of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) from 1960 through estimated 1971.

Closed-system electrical uses ranged from 11,000 tons per year to 20,000 tons per year during the period.

The report also shows Monsanto voluntarily reduced its nonelectrical sales of PCB from the high of 16,000 tons in 1970 to 4,400 tons in 1971. Substantial further reduction will be accomplished in 1972, the company said.

G. F. Cunningham, managing director of Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Co., an operating unit of Monsanto, said, "As part of our control program, the data were originally prepared for the Federal PCB Joint Task Force and other concerned scientists for use on a confidential basis so scientists can properly evaluate the figures and relate them as to impact on the environment."

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Monsanto has now chosen to release the figures publicly "because scientists have continued to express a need for the data to make a proper estimate of how much PCB might be in the environment. We also believe the figures will inform the public about Monsanto's positive actions to limit the sale of PCB to confined applications," the company executive said.

"Now that the figures are public information," Cunningham added, "we are confident both the scientific community and the public press will interpret the data properly. These are production and sales figures only. It should be clearly understood that all this material is not in the environment.

"For example," Cunningham said, "over 60 per cent of all sales in the past 12 years have been for closed-system electrical use. It would be a completely false and irresponsible conclusion to say all PCB produced is in the environment. Much of the material is still contained in sealed electrical equipment where it acts as a fire-resistant safety fluid, protecting human lives and property from the danger of fire and explosion."

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Cunningham concluded, "Monsanto continues its program to control the use and prevent the release of PCB into the environment. To date, we have cut off all sales to paints, plasticizers, sealants, adhesives and all other open-system uses. We are receiving used PCB from customers for regeneration or safe disposal. And we are engaged in an all-out research effort to develop less persistent forms of PCB or suitable products which retain the fire safety features of PCB. We call on other producers, worldwide, to join in this effort."

NOTE TO EDITOR: PCB production and sales figures attached.