

Sham Dep Gx #3
12/21/83 K14

Approved 2/7/79

POSITION STATEMENT - STURGEON, MO. - o-CHLOROPHENOL DERAILMENT
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FOR USE BY MIC PR IN RESPONDING TO DIRECT
MEDIA INQUIRIES

Q. Are the people of Sturgeon being harmed by the smelly air?

A. We have no data indicating that the atmospheric concentrations of o-chlorophenol crude in Sturgeon and the surrounding area are harmful either to humans or to domestic animals. The concentrations are far below toxic levels. For example, the highest concentration in the air samples taken by Monsanto in the afternoon and evening of January 11 was 85 parts per billion. By contrast, the maximum permissible concentration in our manufacturing unit is 5,000 parts per billion, although we seldom exceed 1,000. o-Chlorophenol can be detected at levels far below the level established by OSHA as being safe for long-term industrial exposure.

Q. What about long-term effects such as cancer?

A. We have operated the chlorophenol unit at our Sauget, Ill., plant for years and have seen no chronic toxicity problems among our workers.

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Q. When will the smell go away?

A. That can't be answered with certainty. When the excavations have been completed and the area recovered, the odor will be very much less than it has been; but it may not disappear entirely for some time. The odor threshold for o-chlorophenol is very low, just a few parts per billion in air. Since people vary in their ability to perceive odors, some may smell it and others may not.

Q. Was there any tetrachloro dioxin in the material spilled?

A. We have never detected tetrachloro-dibenzo-p-dioxin in that product or any of our chlorophenols. Our reserve sample of this particular shipment has not been tested for this compound.

Q. Have you found any dioxins?

A. On one sample of three tested, we found 0.2 parts per million of the monochloro dioxin and 0.05 parts per million of the dichloro compound. These materials are much less toxic than the o-chlorophenol itself.

Q. What is your ability to detect the tetrachloro dioxin?

A. In crude o-chlorophenol we can detect 10-30 parts per billion, depending on the precise analytical conditions used.