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Monsanto Restricting PCB Use

Monsanto Co., sole U. S. producer of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), is taking steps on its own to restrict the use of the "persistent chemical which builds up in the environment."

Smarting from political charges and news stories about PCB, including one which appeared in the Beacon Journal last month, a Monsanto spokesman emphasized that the company took the "unilateral action" without pressure from any source.

Like DDT, PCB is a "persistent" chemical which doesn't break down quickly. Used in pesticides, it would tend to remain and accumulate in the bodies of fish, birds, animals and even man as it travels through the food chain cycle.

WHILE MONSANTO didn't mention its use in the manfacture of pesticides, the company did describe several other industrial applications of the 40-year-old chemical.

Developed originally as a non-flammable coolant in electrical transformers and capacitors, it's also used now in commercial heating and cooling systems.

Montanto said it would continue selling PCB for these "closed-system" uses, but is ending sales for adhesives, sealants, chlorinated rubber, specialty paints and other "open-system" applications.

The St. Louis-based firm, which has research and marketing operations here, will continue to sell hydraulic fluids, but with ingredients other than PCB in them.

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