

Monsanto

FROM
(NAME-LOCATION-PHONE)

D. R. Bishop - F3EE - 4-2891

*file
Nitro*

DATE : June 24, 1983

SUBJECT :

REFERENCE :

TO : T. M. Bistline - E2ND
W. D. Carpenter - G3WG
A. M. Ford - E1SA
W. J. McCarville - G3WG
P. S. Park - G3WB
F. E. Kearney - E3NA
R. L. Pfleiderer - B2SL
D. S. Frazer - 1670

cc D. T. Berns - E2SB
S. G. Collins - B1ND
J. F. Hussey - F3EE
G. D. Ingenthron - F3EB
J. T. Nolan - D1A
W. B. Papageorge - B3NA
M. C. Throdahl - D1D

Attached is the news release and backgrounder covering the EPA dioxin testing program at Nitro.

It's anticipated that we will make this available to the Charleston media on July 1 -- the date of the actual taking of soil samples. I'd recommend that the plant make an internal distribution sometime prior to July 1 of at least the backgrounder.

The local media will know this schedule in advance from the EPA and will certainly show up to cover EPA doing its thing in moon suits.

DRB

Dan R. Bishop

DRB:ec

Attachment

CONFIDENTIAL
SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER.

C10199

NEWS

Monsanto

FOR RELEASE IMMEDIATELY

D. R. Bishop
(314) 694-2891
PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
Monsanto Company
800 N. Lindbergh Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63186

MONSANTO TO COOPERATE WITH EPA IN DIOXIN TESTING PROGRAM

NITRO, W. Va., July 1 -- Monsanto Company said today that it will comply with a request from EPA Region III to test for dioxin at the company's manufacturing plant here. The Nitro facility is but one of four Charleston area manufacturing locations that EPA wants to look at as part of its nationwide dioxin surveillance program.

Nitro plant manager David S. Frazer emphasized that EPA's interest in testing at this site stems not from any health concerns but rather the fact that the herbicide 2,4,5-T was manufactured here from 1948 to 1969. Dioxin can be formed in trace quantities as an unwanted, unavoidable contaminant in this manufacturing process.

"We've already assured ourselves that no dioxin-related health problems exist at this facility. The Nitro plant workforce is probably the most medically studied employee group in the world. Three separate health studies have been completed and they all concluded that other than a residual skin disease, known as chloracne, no long term health problems that could be associated with exposure to dioxin have ever been found," Mr. Frazer said.

CONFIDENTIAL -more-
SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER.

C10200

According to Mr. Frazer, the plant and EPA will conduct the joint, side-by-side taking of soil samples on July 1 and the results should be available within two to three weeks.

-o0o-

070183

Note to Editors: Additional background information attached.

CONFIDENTIAL
SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER.

C10201

Monsanto Backgrounder

EPA/NITRO DIOXIN TESTING

MONSANTO COMPANY / ST. LOUIS, MO.

June 23, 1983

EPA Region III (Philadelphia) has announced that it plans to test for dioxin at 12 sites -- four each in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Maryland. One of these sites is Monsanto's Nitro, West Virginia, plant.

Monsanto and EPA have been discussing this proposal since early April, and it is our intention to cooperate with EPA in carrying out this program.

The Nitro plant is a target of the EPA testing program because this facility manufactured the herbicide 2,4,5-T from 1948 to 1969. Dioxin was formed in trace amounts as an unwanted, unavoidable contaminant in this production process.

The 2,4,5-T equipment was dismantled, decontaminated and buried on the plant site over 10 years ago. Except for filter cloths, dust bags and floor sweepings, the 2,4,5-T process was fairly "clean"...solid waste did not normally result from the manufacturing process. The filters, dust bags and floor sweepings were burned in the plant incinerator -- a standard, acceptable practice during the 1950s and 1960s. Any liquid waste generated from this process was sent to the plant sewer system, the same as any other plant effluent in those days.

CONFIDENTIAL
SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER.

C10202

The Nitro plant's dioxin monitoring program has always focused on assuring that any residual dioxin contamination that might exist from past manufacturing operations is being contained on the plant property and that the employees are not being exposed to it. Thus we have sampled for this compound in monitoring wells at the disposal site, in the plant's waste water and in the water from the Kanawha River. The EPA was advised of this testing program in advance and invited to participate in its implementation.

While we've never found any dioxin down to the limit of detection (10 ppt), this is not to say it isn't present somewhere on the plant site in some harmless, miniscule amount beneath the surface. Indeed, based on published reports of recent research, scientists have established that dioxin is ubiquitous in the environment and stems from most combustion processes. In addition to manufacturing sources, these include power plants, municipal trash incinerators, automobile engines, cigarette smoke and woodburning fireplaces. Dioxin has even been found in the background air in cities throughout the United States in the parts per billion range.

The point of all of this is that dioxin can be found in the environment almost anywhere if one looks for it and has the technical ability to detect it.

The question then becomes not whether dioxin can be found but, rather, does its presence constitute a potential health or environmental hazard.

CONFIDENTIAL
SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER.

C10203

With respect to Monsanto's Nitro plant, the answer is an emphatic "no." We've assured ourselves that no dioxin problems exist at this site. This particular workforce is probably the most medically studied employee group in the world. Three separate health studies have been conducted on employees at this location including those who worked in the 2,4,5-T unit. Other than a residual skin disease, known as chloracne, no long term health problems that could be associated with exposure to dioxin have ever been found.

Furthermore, we've tested our waste water effluent, the river water and monitoring wells installed to check the integrity of the plant's old disposal site. No environmental problems exist from any dioxin that might be present below the surface stemming from former operations.

So we don't understand this sudden interest in testing for dioxin at a location where no problems exist. This, notwithstanding, Monsanto has always shared information and cooperated with both state and federal agencies at all of our manufacturing locations. We intend to continue with this policy and thus we are cooperating with the EPA on this new request.

Suffice it to say, Monsanto is fully committed to protecting the health and safety of its employees and its plant communities and we'll do whatever we have to do to maintain their trust and confidence. We view this clearly as our responsibility.

CONFIDENTIAL
SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER

C10204

At the same time, the EPA, the Centers for Disease Control and the news media have a responsibility to keep the subject of dioxin in perspective. To this point, we agree with the sense of a resolution issued recently by the American Medical Association's House of Delegates which said, in effect, that dioxin has been made the focus of a "witch hunt" through the dissemination of rumors, hearsay, unfounded hysterical pronouncements and doomsday forecasts.

The AMA resolution stated that there is no scientific evidence that dioxin poses an imminent danger to people. The AMA further committed itself to a campaign aimed at countering what it called "hysterical malreporting" about the chemical. We applaud their stand and join them in this effort and would urge others, especially those empowered with the public trust, to do likewise.

-o0o-

CONFIDENTIAL
SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER.

C10205

STURGEON LITIGATION

FROM THE FILES OF D. Bishop

THIS FILE HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY LINDA SHAPIRO

FOR:

- Documents describing the presence or potential presence of dioxin in Monsanto products.
- Documents referring to the toxicity of any Isomer of dioxins.
- Documents referring to the toxicity of any Chlorophenol or Chlorophenol product.
- Documents referring to health effects as they relate to the above.

DATE 4/22/85