Democrat and Chronicle
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Firm to stop making PCBs within a year

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Co., the only U.S. manufacturer of PCB insulating fluids, announced Monday that it will quit producing the fluids by late next year.

Earle H. Harbison Jr., general manager of Monsanto's specialty chemicals division, said the firm will complete distribution of all inventories and withdraw completely from the market by Oct. 31, 1977.

Manufacture would stop sooner, Harbison said, but electrical transformer and capacitor manufacturers have said they can't convert to other materials any earlier.

PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) is a stable, fire-resistant chemical that is used widely in transformers and capacitors.

"Unfortunately," Harbison said, "the very properties that have made PCBs ideal and even mandatory for these essential uses, were also found in the early 1970s to be the properties causing them to persist and accumulate in the environment."

The New York Environmental Conservation Department and the General Electric Co. agreed recently that GE would contribute some $3 million toward the cost of cleaning PCBs from the Hudson River. The agreement came after a lengthy hearing over leakage of PCBs from GE plants into the Hudson.

Monsanto has already quit making PCBs for carbonless copy paper, fire resistant hydraulic fluids, heat transfer fluids and plasticizers.

Government tests for a three-year period discovered that the levels of PCB in major rivers are not increasing and, in some cases, are actually decreasing, Harbison said. But he added that the public still sees PCBs as a threat.

Some scientists fear PCBs can cause cancer, while others say there is no evidence that they are dangerous to animals or humans.

Because they are not readily biodegradeable, however, they accumulate in animal tissue. In some places fishing has been banned because of high levels of PCBs in fish.

Monsanto is testing non-PCB components but the new product probably will not be as fire resistant, Harbison said.

OKLAHOMA CITY TIMES
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Chemical withdrawn

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Co. will halt production of PCB insulating fluids next year because of the public's fear of adverse effects from the chemical.

Monsanto will withdraw it completely from the market no later than Oct. 31, 1977, said Earle H. Harbison Jr., general manager of the firm's specialty chemicals division.

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OCT 6 1976

Monsanto to Stop Producing PCBs

ST. LOUIS (AP) — The public's fear of rising levels of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) in the nation's water has led the Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Co. to halt production of the chemical.

Monsanto, the only maker of PCB dielectric fluids in the U.S., said yesterday that it plans to withdraw completely from the market by Oct. 31 of next year.

PCB, widely seen as an ideal fire-resistant dielectric fluid for transformers and capacitors, has also been found to resist biodegradation, causing it to accumulate in the tissues of animals and fish.

The extension of the closing date until late next year was done to give equipment manufacturers time to convert to other materials.

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OCT 6 1976

Monsanto Quits PCB's

ST. LOUIS — Monsanto Company has announced it will cease production of polychlorinated biphenyls, PCB's, at the end of October, 1977 and end all sales of PCB's when inventories are depleted. The synthetic compounds have become feared pollutants, largely for the same lasting properties which make them valuable to industry. Monsanto has been the principal supplier of PCB's, industrial chemicals used as insulators and fire retardants in electrical transformers.

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