

NEWS

Monsanto

FOR RELEASE

IMMEDIATELY

MONSANTO INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS CO.

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PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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MONSANTO ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF DIOXIN SAMPLING

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 9 -- Monsanto Company said today that low levels of dioxin have been found in two old and essentially idle buildings at its John F. Queeny Plant in St. Louis. Company medical officials said that these isolated areas of contamination do not present a hazard to employees, the public or the environment.

According to Queeny plant manager, George F. Knollmeyer, 15 composite samples, obtained from scraping encrusted grit from beams, crevices and cracks in several structures and taken from soil beneath paved areas, were tested. Twelve of these samples either detected no dioxin or levels below one part per billion (ppb). Only three of the 15 samples revealed levels above one ppb; the highest was 21 ppb, the others were 2 ppb and 3 ppb.

Mr. Knollmeyer explained that relatively small quantities of the herbicide 2,4,5-T were shipped to the Queeny Plant at various times between 1949 and 1964 for further processing. It is now known that this herbicide can contain dioxin as an unwanted contaminant. "However," he continued, "2,4,5-T was never manufactured at Queeny and thus, no dioxin was ever generated here."

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Mr. Knollmeyer pointed out that until recently it was thought that dioxin broke down rapidly into harmless materials. "However, findings learned from the Missouri dioxin experience during 1983 made it clear that dioxin can remain in the environment for years, bound tightly to other substances. Based on these new findings, the plant decided to search for dioxin in virtually every nook and cranny in areas where it likely might be found," he said.

George Roush, M.D., director of Monsanto's Department of Medicine and Environmental Health, said there is no evidence to suggest that any Queeny Plant employee has ever been adversely affected by dioxin. "The plant, which has extensive medical records dating to the early 1950s, has never experienced a known case of chloracne, the acne-like skin condition commonly associated with dioxin exposure," he said.

Dr. Roush added that the "one part per billion" safety guideline recommended by the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) was intended for residential sites only and does not apply to industrial locations.

"The guideline is based on the highly unlikely assumption that a small child would eat one gram of dioxin-contaminated soil every day for several years while at the same time being exposed to another gram every day through skin contact. This obviously does not apply to any past or present situation at Queeny," Dr. Roush said.

Mr. Knollmeyer said, "Although there is no reason to believe this low level of contamination presents a health hazard to our workforce, the prudent course, now that we know dioxin is present, is to determine as quickly as possible the best way to remedy the situation. One of the first steps," he continued, "will be to undertake a more extensive sampling program to better define the extent of the contamination, and this process is underway."

The Queeny Plant produces hundreds of chemicals for use in a cross-section of industrial and commercial applications. Approximately 1,000 employees work at the plant, which is located on South Second Street in South St. Louis.

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copy K.H.

FROM
NAME-LOCATION-PHONE. D. R. Bishop - F3EE - 4-2891

DATE : January 25, 1985

cc. J. F. Hussey

SUBJECT :

REFERENCE :

TO : J. G. Nassif - E2NG

Attached is the press query sheet I filled out after the interview with the Post-Dispatch reporter, Jo Mannies. Incidentally, she works in the Washington, D.C., news bureau.

What I actually said was that NIOSH approached us in the late '70s with a request to inspect the work and medical records of employees at our W GK and Nitro plants who may have been exposed to dioxin during the time we made 2,4,5-T and Agent Orange. I explained that we made "T" at Nitro from about 1948 to 1969 and from about 1963 to 1969 we shipped "T" from Nitro to W GK where it was blended in a 50-50 mixture with 2,4-D (made at W GK) to create Agent Orange.

I did not say we have not made anything that could have generated any of the dioxin isomers since 1969. I was talking only about the NIOSH registry and its focus on employees who may have been exposed at W GK during the period we made Agent Orange.

The reporter and I did not discuss anything else. She didn't ask me about any other product or process or time frame.

The Globe-Democrat, in today's edition, also had a story on this subject in which I am misquoted twice where comments attributed to me state in effect that the plants (W GK and Nitro) still generate dioxin.


Dan R. Bishop

DRB:ec

Attachment

C02410

PRESS QUERY

SEP -

COMPANY (OpUnit or Corporate): MIC

SUBJECT: OCP SPILL AT STURGEON, MO.

REPORTER & MEDIA: Howard Mitchell, KFRU-Radio
(314) 449-1400

TIME & DATE: September 11, 1979

QUESTION & RESPONSE:

*9/12/79
J. C. D. Williams
J. B. Edwards*

<u>X</u>	News Bureau
<u>X</u>	J. T. Nolan
<u>X</u>	J. E. McKee
<u>X</u>	J. v. Morse
—	D. R. Bishop
—	W. J. McCarville
—	W. R. Mulhall
<u>X</u>	J. F. Hussey-Washington, D.C.
<u>X</u>	S. Pickard-Washington, D.C.
<u>X</u>	New York Public Relations
—	Brussels Public Relations
—	MAP PR
<u>X</u>	MCI PR
<u>X</u>	MIC PR G. Young
—	MP & R PR
—	MTC PR
—	INT'L PR
<u>X</u>	K. W. Easley
<u>X</u>	J. R. Foehr
<u>X</u>	T. L. Gossage
<u>X</u>	E. L. Head
<u>X</u>	J. C. McPhillips
<u>X</u>	R. A. Stohr
<u>X</u>	J. S. Metcalf

- Q. Will you confirm my notes that you told me in February that you found TCDD at 22 to 37 ppb in the OCP and that this information was passed to the EPA?
- A. On February 9 our chemists reported finding TCDD at a .037 ppm average level in the product reserve sample. We informed the EPA of this that evening and contacted the cleanup contractor the next morning.
- Q. A Mr. Wickland of the Kansas City EPA office says you never notified their office that the isomer was TCDD? What do you say?
- A. We called the EPA On-Scene Coordinator, Mr. Harry Gilmer. I believe he was in the field, probably at the Mayor's office or fire department or wherever the EPA communications center was in Sturgeon. I suggest you contact Harry Gilmer to confirm that. In addition, we supplied two samples of OCP from the reserve sample and delivered these to the Lambert St. Louis airport on February 10. These samples were picked up by the EPA and flown off for analysis.
- Q. This is an incredible story. Senator Eagleton recently asked the Kansas City office which of the dioxin isomers the cleanup workers got in their blood and the EPA says they're not sure even now. Yet you told them in February that it was the 2,3,7,8 tetrachloro dioxin isomer. They've kept it a secret all this time.

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A. That's not incongruous to me. We reported a very miniscule amount in the product sample, just .037 ppm on average. That's a very small amount. Now, let's say your arm got soaked in the OCP, which would burn you badly. Then, someone asks how much of the dioxin impurities got absorbed through the skin and is in the blood. The amount actually in the blood would be astronomically low. I doubt whether there is anyone who can say absolutely which, if any, of the dioxins was found in the cleanup workers blood. There are 75 different isomers of dioxin and they are difficult to identify in very small quantities.

(Later called the Kansas City EPA to inform them of this slant.)

Source of Answer: Notes

Handled by: R. C. Isham