

WOODBURY, N. J.
TIMES
(PHILA. CAMDEN MARKET AREA)
D. 22,000

SEP 9 1976

No Chemical, Cancer Link Found

A preliminary study by Monsanto Chemical Co. has failed to show a link between certain industrial chemicals and a higher than average cancer rate such as that found recently among workers at the Mobil Oil Co. refinery in Paulsboro.

Monsanto is the sole manufacturer of the chemicals, known as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which are used mainly in electrical insulation.

In a report released last week, Mobil said it found seven cancer cases among 92 employees at the Paulsboro refinery.

The workers were exposed to PCBs during an eight year period that ended in 1957 when Mobil stopped using PCBs.

That cancer rate is above the national average and includes three cases of malignant melanoma, a fairly rare form of skin cancer and two cases of pancreatic cancer.

But Monsanto notes it has found no cases of either disease among more than 300 current and former employees who have been involved in the manufacture of PCBs dating back to 1935.

"In my opinion, the fact that we

have found no cases of either of these cancers casts strong doubt that the findings of the Mobil study were in fact related to PCB," said Dr. George Roush, director of Monsanto's medical and environmental health departments.

PCBs are made at the company's plant in Sauget, Ill., just south of East St. Louis. PCBs were never produced at Monsanto's Bridgeport plant.

Monsanto did find a higher-than-average rate of lung cancer among employees exposed to PCBs but Roush warned the statistics are still too vague to draw any conclusions.

Based on the Mobil information, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health in Rockville, Md., has asked researchers in the U.S. and abroad to search for further links between PCBs and cancer. It has also begun its own two-year study of New York state workers who have been exposed to PCBs.

In January, Monsanto announced it will cease production of PCBs because of environmental concerns as soon as its customers can convert to other substances.

—Joe Diemer