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MINUTES OF AROCLOR "AD HOC" COMMITTEE

First Meeting

Date: September 5, 1969

Present: M. W. Farrar
P. B. Hodges, Secretary
E. V. John
W. R. Richard
E. P. Wheeler, Chairman

Objectives: (Agreed to by the Committee)

Submit recommendations for action which will:

1. Permit continued sales and profits of Aroclors and Terphenyls.

2. Permit continued development of uses and sales.

3. Protect image of Organic Division and of the Corporation.

Background Discussion of Problem:

1. Agreed that we should concentrate on Aroclor 1254 and 1260. Aroclor 1242 has not yet been incriminated for these possible reasons:

   a. Nature of uses of 1242 minimizes environmental contamination.

   b. It may degrade biologically.

   c. Unless analytical techniques are performed carefully, 1242 can be destroyed by oxidation during the analyses.

2. PCB has been found in:

   a. Fish, oysters, shrimp, birds.

   b. Along coastlines of industrialized areas such as Great Britain, Sweden, Rhine River, low countries, Lake Michigan, Pensacola Bay, in Western wild life (eagles). It may be a global contaminant.

3. PCB has been tied to DDT in effects on disappearance of wild birds which have fish diets. Ratio of PCB to DDT has been about 40-50:1 generally. Dr. Reisboro reported almost 1:1 ratio. PCB may be contributing to or exaggerating the effects of other chlorinated aromatics.

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4. Sample acceptance from the numerous researchers was discussed. This has been done on a limited basis. Our corroboration of testing of their samples adds to our knowledge and demonstrates a willingness by Monsanto to help define the problem, but it is expensive and also tightens any possible legal cases against us--it rules out possibilities that Aroclors are not involved.

5. Toxicity levels:

Aroclors have been shown to be safe for man in reasonable exposure concentrations. We are testing 100 ppm in diet of rats and dogs on a rule-of-thumb basis that 1/100 of toxicity level is safe and 1 ppm is probably the upper limit in total diet.

"Allowable levels" are probably lower than DDT. The worst example to date is the test at Pensacola where 5 ppb was found to be toxic to shrimp in 18 days exposure.

One problem we are facing is to keep the "safe level" (?) for shrimp from being applied to e.g. Lake Michigan where more tolerant fish species probably exist. We need to show the safe level in shrimp, clams, oysters and several species of fish.

Many toxicity studies on PCB are underway and it was agreed to be desirable to keep contact with all laboratories which have requested Aroclor samples. One-half to two-thirds of the sample requests have come from state labs (who would let us know what they are doing) and about 1/3 have come from universities (who may give us the "brush-off"). Question of who should call on the laboratories was not resolved.

6. Escambia River Problem:

For a clearer understanding of the general problem, the situation at Pensacola was reviewed. From a relatively negligible discharge of 1-3 gal/day into a large river, 1/4 mile downstream levels of 42 ppb in water and 476 ppm in mud were found. Although use of Aroclor was halted immediately, we can expect the water contamination to continue for a lengthy period by leaching from the contaminated mud. No downstream samples have yet been taken to measure the decrease in contamination (as of 9/5/69).

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7. Problem in Producing Plants:

P. Hodges reviewed what was being done to stop gross losses at Anniston and at WGK. Basically, the work to date consists of stopping or trapping any sewering of free Aroclor with return to process or land fill disposal of the trapped Aroclor. This will reduce levels in plant effluents to below solubility ranges, particularly as we move to install traps (or sumps) back into the waste source points where flows are small and as yet undiluted by Aroclor-free waste streams. The question of exactly how far to reduce (how much money to spend) is not yet clear and expenditures to date have been comparatively small. It was agreed that, until the problems of gross environmental contamination by our customers have been alleviated, there is little object in going to expensive extremes in limiting discharges from the plants.

One problem that has been interfering with logical development of our plant Aroclor waste reduction programs has been delays in obtaining analytical results from in-plant and ex-plant sampling. It was agreed that additional help was necessary in Dr. Tucker's lab but no specific actions were proposed. In addition to in-plant work, the plants are sampling the receiving streams.

Air pollution reduction has not been considered by the plants to date except as incidental prevention of product contamination during tank car and drum loading operations. Long range (1-2 year) improvements at Anniston are planned to reduce product contamination (and air emissions) in car loading operations. It was agreed that a comprehensive air sampling and testing program would be very expensive and is probably not justified at this stage of the problem.

8. Environmental Contamination by Customers:

Our in-plant problems are very small vs. problems of dealing with environmental contamination by customers. In one application alone (highway paints), one million lbs/year are used. Through abrasion and leaching we can assume that nearly all of this Aroclor winds up in the environment.

Because the rate of natural (bio-degradation) is very low, other degradation must destroy PCB equal to the rate of environmental exposure in order to avoid build-up of contamination.

A general discussion was held on philosophy of controlling sales or working with customers to prevent pollution by PCB

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Action Planned:

Each member of the group will submit to the other members for consideration possible ideas and programs to help accomplish the overall objectives set by the Committee. Following review of the suggestions, the Committee will meet again at an early date to be arranged by the Chairman.

P. B. Hodges
Secretary

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