FF

Safety Laws Call For PCB Use, Monsanto Says

The Monsanto Co., which last week announced it would continue selling the controversial chemical polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), called a major pollution threat, pointed out Monday that public safety laws throughout the country require use of PCB in certain electric power equipment.

"Earlier transformer coolants often exploded and burned, causing numerous deaths and injuries," Howard L. Minckler, company vice president and general manager of the organic chemicals division, said.

IN ADDITION, he said, there are no available substitutes which equal the safety performance of PCB in power-transmission equipment.

"A return to use of combustible oil products would be a retreat to practices of the 1930s and an unnecessary threat to human life," Minckler said.

"Monsanto has voluntarily taken action to restrict use of this product and to prevent further environmental exposure. We believe this is the best approach we can take until a replacement for PCB is found by our research people."

HEAVY EXPOSURE of human beings to PCB can cause liver and kidney diseases, and even death, according to Environment magazine.

Commenting on a recent report that PCB can induce birth defects in animals, Minckler said, "Monsanto is not aware of any scientific data that indicates polychlorinated biphenyls may cause birth defects."