

CONFIDENTIAL

March 23, 1973

MEMO TO: Mr. W. S. Ferguson
FROM: W. A. Knapp
SUBJECT: VCM

Talked with Dr. Torkleson of Dow whom I consider the driving force in MCA program for toxicology of VCM.

In his trip to Italy accompanied by a Dow pathologist, he had hoped that they had mis-read slides; this hope did not become the fact since Dow pathologist could not disagree with any of the findings which have been reported. The hope remains that exposure of food and litter to the gas may be a contributing factor, but Dr. Torkleson thinks the odds against this changing the result materially. He has suggested that Italians investigate this angle but has no way of knowing what they will do. Food was something like our Purina Chow but, of course, made from native oil, etc. Percent fat in diet is not known.

Dow Management is extremely worried about this development and one of their executives is about to contact other producers (and presumably users) so that the industry (with permission of the European group) can as a group take all the data known to NIOSH. They do not want to act unilaterally.

Dow uses and has advised all of its customers to use 50 ppm as TLV for VCM. It would like to get out of sale of VCM as aerosol propellant but doesn't know quite how to do it. Thinking behind this was not explored but suspect that fear is of spot-lighting the health concern. Dow no longer makes PVC and there is less than 1 ppm VCM in SARAN.

With respect to possible disclosures from European VCM investigations, there is to be a European seminar on carcinogenesis next month which Dr. Maltoni will attend. He is not authorized to discuss his studies being conducted for the European chemical group, but he is described as an outgoing individual. The work of Dr. Viola's associate at Rome will be discussed at a symposium in the fall of 1974. If nothing develops before then, it may be expected that Maltoni work will have been completed and the Industrial Biotest work

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far enough along to give some indications. Also, epidemiological study here will have been completed.

Since Solvay et Cie is a member of the group supporting Dr. Maltoni and Dr. Viola is a consultant to Solvay et Cie, it would appear that Solvay et Cie should have the best idea of what is happening.

Dr. Torkleson also said that he overheard a conversation in which sputum tests with VCM workers were suggested to have given positive indications in first test and negative results in second test. Relating this to Dr. Duffield (ICI), Dr. Duffield stated that there were no indications of sluffing off of tissue.

WAK:md

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