

File

Taylor

606 South 10th Street
Petersburg, IN 47567
August 20, 1986

Dr. Matthew S. Meselson
11 Kirkland Place
Cambridge, Mass. 02138


Dear Dr. Meselson:

It was my intention three years ago to write you concerning the Hoosier Energy's Frank E. Ratts Generating Station, Petersburg, Indiana plan to incinerate polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) (copy of newspaper article enclosed). I obtained your name from an article about dioxin which appeared in the "Evansville Courier," Evansville, Indiana (copy enclosed) about three weeks after the Petersburg article was published.

I was comparatively new in Petersburg at the time Hoosier Energy announced its plan to burn PCB's. Although the plan for burning PCB's made NBC nightly news, the community seemed to accept without question the plant's assurance that there was no danger involved; and so I was hesitant to write. However, my concern has never lessened. With the present warranted controversy over Union Carbide's PCB removal Unison Plant in Henderson, Kentucky, I decided to write you to obtain your opinion of the burning of PCB's at the Frank E. Ratts Generating Station in Petersburg. We live just three miles from the plant and when the wind is from the north, the emissions pass directly over our home. My concern is not just for my husband and myself but for the entire community.

A few weeks ago, before writing you, I contacted the plant to inquire if they were still burning PCB's and when they expected the process to be completed. I was referred to the public relations representative in Bloomington, Indiana for this information. The gentleman with whom I talked told me they were still burning PCB's but would temporarily stop August 1st "to make new studies." He stated that the new studies are for insurance purposes and have nothing to do with the safety of burning PCB's--"they have state and federal EPA approval through 1988." He said the burning is intermittent but he could not tell me when they would complete the process. I told him it was my understanding that the end result of burning PCB's was dioxin, but he assured me that there was no danger as there was "complete combustion." However, the newspaper article did not say that nor do I believe it. (I just recently learned from a church friend who is an employee at the Frank E. Ratts Generating Station that they burn 4,000 to 5,000 gallons each time they burn.)

I will appreciate any information you can give me. We have a good-sized vegetable garden and I am wondering if there could be any contamination. Would you know of any place that is qualified to test the soil for dioxin? Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

(Mrs. William T. Taylor)

Encs.