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“In the summer of 1975, Dr. Warren Guy, a toxicologist and professor at the University of Florida, called 3M’s corporate headquarters concerning research he and Dr. Donald Taves, a toxicologist and professor at the University of Rochester, were going to present at a symposium organized by the American Chemical Society (“ACS”). Dr. Guy and Dr. Taves had discovered the presence of an unidentified organic fluorine chemical compound in human blood obtained from blood banks in five U.S. cities. According to an internal 3M memorandum documenting these phone calls, Dr. Guy called 3M to see if it knew of the “possible sources” as Dr. Guy correctly “got the information that 3M’s fluorocarbon carboxylic acids are used as surfactants and wanted mice, guinea pigs, quail, mallard ducks, mink, river otters, and oysters.

Twelve days later, and following “negotiations” with the EPA, 3M announced that it was “voluntarily” phasing out production of PFOS.

Incredulously, 3M chose to “plead ignorance” and instead “adopted a position of scientific curiosity and desire to assist in any way possible...”

In another phone call, Dr. Taves specifically asked 3M if the “fluorochemical they have found in human blood is either a derivative of a perfluorocarboxylic acid or a perfluorosulphonic acid,” and whether “the fluorochemical found in the blood might be coming from [3M’s] paper or paperboard” products. On August 26, 1975, Dr. Guy and Dr. Taves presented their research at an ACS symposium in Chicago. Shortly thereafter, on October 16, 1975, Dr. Guy sent 3M a copy of the paper presented in Chicago.¹³ Dr. Guy asked in return that: “[i]f you or other interested parties at 3M have any ideas on how we can better characterize these fluorocompounds please let either Dr. Taves or me know.”¹⁴ The manuscript detailed the methods used by Drs. Guy and Taves to conclude that organic fluorine had been found on average at 30 parts per billion in the blood of the general population.¹⁵ Dr. Guy and Dr. Taves stated that based on their analysis, “the fluorine containing part of the compounds in the isolate (from human plasma) resemble perfluorooctanoic acid (“PFOA”).”¹⁶



FDSA

FIRE DEPT SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

EWG, Legal Paper from the U.S. District Court, Multi District Litigation, Charleston District, South Carolina, February 22, 2022, <https://static.ewg.org/pdf/2022-Motion-to-Compel-min.pdf>, Exhibit K., p. 93

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