

APR 11, 1971  
AMERICAN

# Kepone Causes Cancer In Rats

Kepone, the pesticide that caused chemical workers in Maryland, Va. last year, has been found to be a cancer-causing agent in studies conducted by the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Chlorocyclopentadiene, the generic name for Kepone, was found to produce liver cancer in rats and mice fed large doses of the chemical, first developed by Allied Chemical Corp. and then marketed by Lee Science Products Co. of Maryland, Va.

Although none of the Life Sciences employees have contracted cancer, they were afflicted with other symptoms of Kepone poisoning, including disturbing tremors and abnormal reflexes, sterility.

The results of the preliminary studies preliminary studies show Kepone is a potent cancer-causing agent, raising the suspicion among scientists about the hazards of the pesticide.

Dr. J. B. Kealey, assistant commissioner for public health, Dr. J. B. Kealey, said in a telephone interview that public health officials had "treated" the employees from the plant based on preliminary research in the laboratory at the Medical College of Virginia.

It was this fear that led to the wild state ban on fishing in the James River, when reports of Kepone were found in the waters and in shellfish, presumably from the Lee Science plant.

The state will monitor the fishes from the James River to make sure that none of the fish contain more than one part per million of Kepone.

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In the James River, when traces of Kepone were found in the waters and in shellfish, presumably from the Life Science plant.

The state is still monitoring catches from the James River to make sure that none of the fish contain more than one part per billion of Kepone, the acceptable safety level set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

EPA banned sale and use of Kepone on Aug. 25, 1975, a month after the Life Science plant had been closed. Life Science sold its total output to Allied Chemical. Only 1 per cent of the pesticide was marketed in this country, with the rest shipped abroad.

Although Kepone, unlike other carcinogenic pesticides such as DDT, never came into widespread use, Kenley said. Virginia officials are still worried about residents of the Hopewell area and others who may have been exposed to sea food contaminated by Kepone.

"We've been seeking funds from EPA and the cancer institute to do long-term follow-up studies," said Kenley, pointing out that the potential of Kepone in small traces to cause cancer in humans will not be established for 15 or 20 years owing to the long time that cancers take to develop.

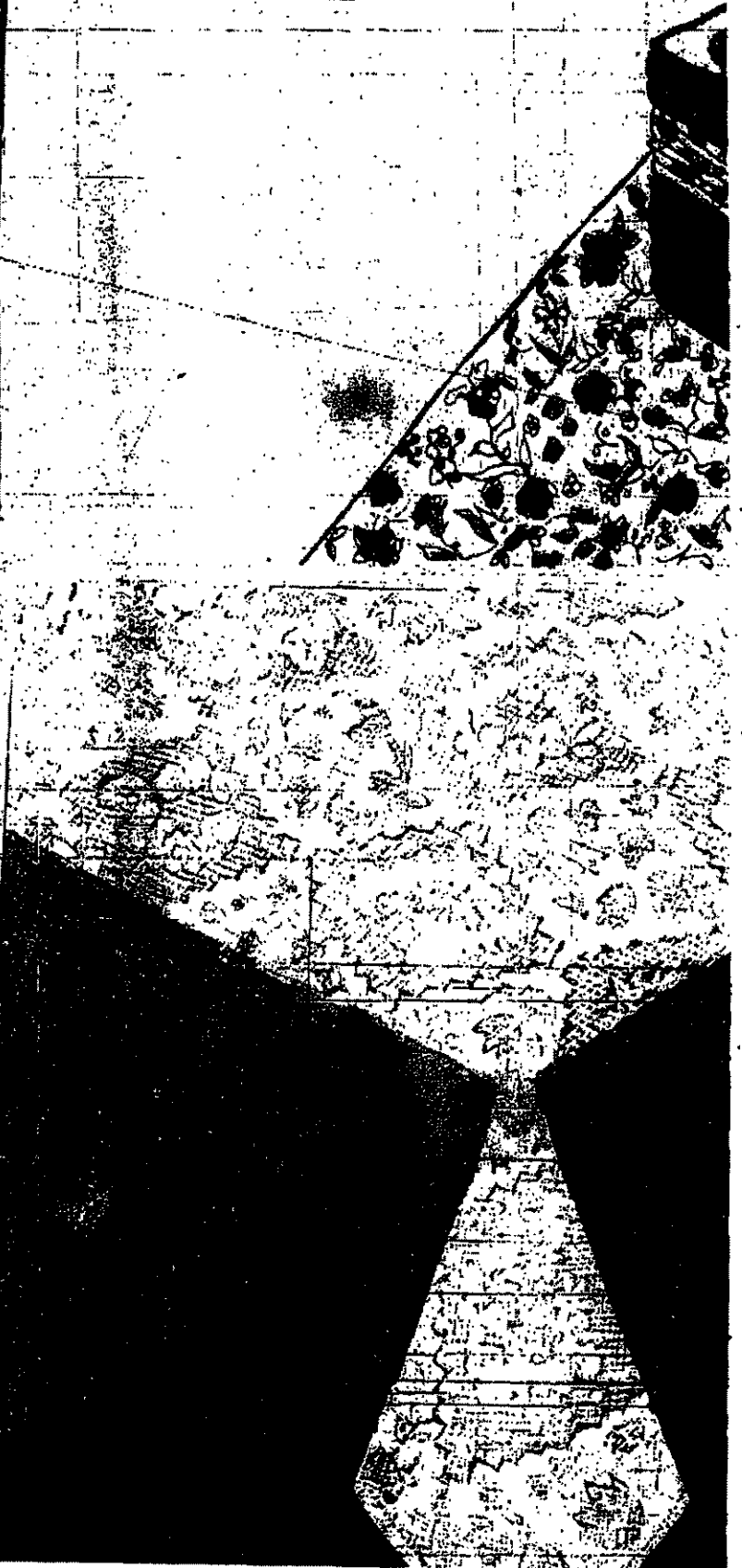
The Life Science workers and their families that show symptoms of exposure to Kepone will be closely monitored for as long as necessary. The program paid for with state funds, Kenley said.

Virginia state health officials, led by Dr. Robert Jackson, initiated the investigation that led to the closing of the Life Science plant. A local physician sent a blood sample from a fish worker.

In the NCI study, rats and mice were fed amounts of Kepone ranging from 8 to 40 parts per million. Anywhere from 7 to 88 per cent of the animals exposed to high doses of Kepone developed liver cancer. Rats fed low levels of Kepone also developed liver damage of a non-cancerous or precancerous nature that did not show up in the untreated rats used as controls for the testing.

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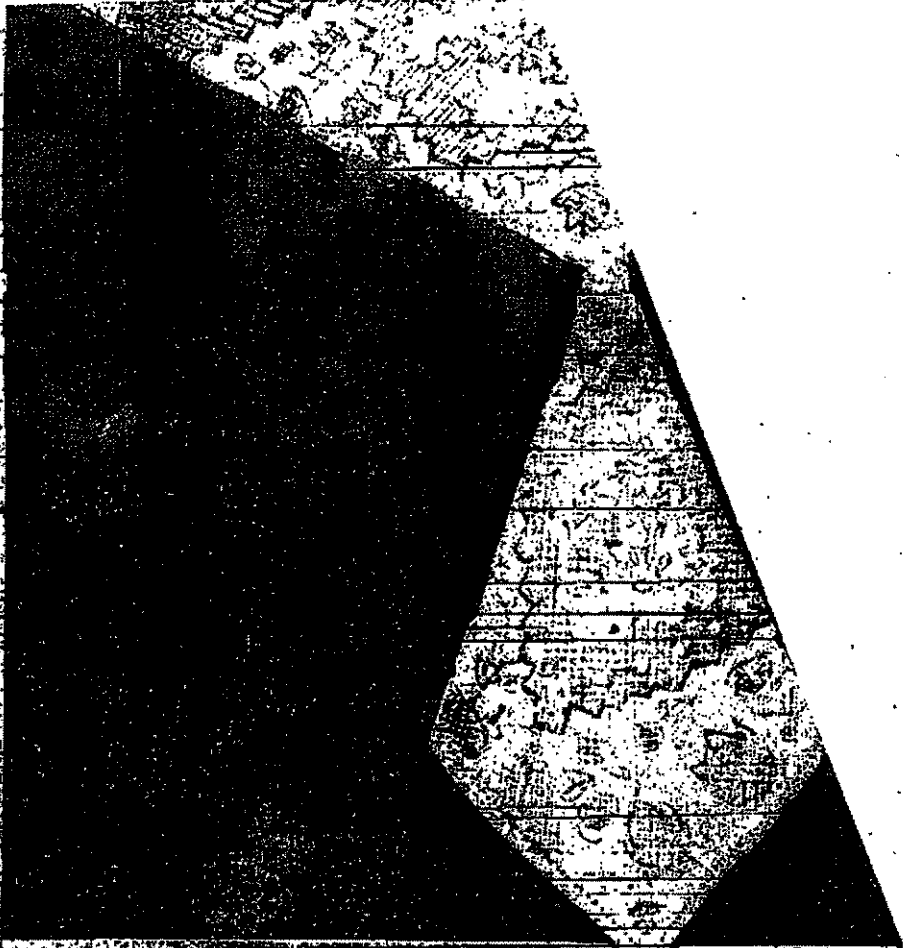
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