



TECHNICAL
COMMUNICATION
NINTH EDITION

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LANNON

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Projects and Case Studies

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Projects and Case Studies

Monsanto Case Research

Your team will be writing a formal recommendation report on an issue with pollution in Alabama. You may research on the Web beyond the documents assigned, but each group member will need to read through the "[Chemical Industry Archives](#)" and take links to the original corporate memos and legal documents of an environmental disaster similar to the Sarah Burnes case in your textbook on pages 16-18. Be sure to open and save ALL the linked PDF documents! Analyze the language used in the corporate memos referring to what is in actuality a deadly pollutant that poisoned an entire town in Alabama for 20 years. As a team, plan and write a formal recommendation report for your instructor. Describe the problem as you see it. How could this situation have been avoided? In what ways were technical writers or workers who were involved in writing technical memos and reports responsible? What recommendations can your team make to avoid such problems in the future? If everyone in your group does not agree, discuss the dissenting opinions in your problem analysis, but try to formulate bulleted recommendations in the conclusion that your entire team can sign off on.

Related Links

[PCB Pollution Suits Have Day in Court in Alabama](#)

New York Times article on the Monsanto pollution of Anniston, Alabama.

NOTE: You may need to register as a free user at the *New York Times* site first. Then if you take the link above, it won't charge you to access the page. If you try to get there through the archives, it will charge you a fee, however.

[Monsanto Guilty of Polluting Town](#)

Jury opens door to more lawsuits by residents. Like the *New York Times* article, this MSNBC piece works to translate technical information into a form accessible to a non-professional audience. Compare the level of difficulty between the two articles. Are the audiences different?

[The Chemical Industry Archives: A Project of the Environmental Working Group Anniston, Alabama: Monsanto & Pollution Contamination Betrayal Introduction](#)

The cover story on the first page changes from time to time. Look for an article titled "Anniston, Alabama: Monsanto & Pollution, Contamination, Betrayal." Analyze this site. Does it have an axe to grind? Can you detect a bias in its archives?

The Dirty Secrets link has a treasure trove of media articles on the Anniston investigation, but more importantly, PDFs of CONFIDENTIAL internal Monsanto technical documents and memos are archived at this site, memos that have only become public because of the court case. Print and read these documents carefully. What is hidden between the lines? What ethical lines did these writers cross, if any? What would you do in the same position as those writers? What would you do if your internal technical memos were suddenly public and part of a legal proceeding?