



Dioxin '95: Fifteenth International Symposium on Chlorinated Dioxins and Related Compounds Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, August 21-25, 1995

Ray Clement

Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Laboratory Services Branch, 125 Resources Road,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M9P 3V6

Introduction

The 15th meeting in this series provided a difficult challenge in terms of preparation, because the 14th meeting took place in Kyoto, Japan from November 21- 25, 1994. This left organizers fewer than nine months to accomplish an event that generally takes more than a year to put together. Fortunately, 22 sponsors and exhibitors provided enough initial funding to allow for an accelerated planning process. This meeting was only the second to have been chaired by government workers (Sub Ramamoorthy, Alberta Environmental Protection and Ray Clement, Ontario Ministry of Environment & Energy).

Conference Planning and Organization

Although Edmonton possesses reasonable conference facilities, for reasons of cost, convenience and ambience, it was decided to take the unusual course of using both of the two main Edmonton hotels to deliver the technical program. To minimize walking for delegates, sessions were scheduled thematically. For example, sessions on Fate, Human Health Risk, Exposure, Mechanism of Action, Toxicology, and related topics were all scheduled in the Westin hotel, whereas Analytical, Formation/Emissions, Quality Control – and related sessions – were all scheduled for the Hilton Hotel. Although the hotels were only a couple of city blocks apart, most delegates found they could pretty much stay in one of the two venues. The Program at a Glance is shown below under “Technical Program”.

The Westin hotel was the main venue, where the opening and closing ceremonies were held. The exhibit was also held in the Westin, where a special viewing period Monday 4:20 to 6:00 was scheduled – with refreshments!

After a successful poster competition at the Dioxin '89 meeting in Toronto, the Dioxin '95 meeting was only the second to have prizes for the best posters in each of six research areas. Again, the sponsor for these awards was Wellington Laboratories, and recipients were again chosen by delegate ballot.

Technical Program

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE										
	MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
	Session A	Session B	Session A	Session B	Session A	Session B	Session A	Session B	Session A	Session B
Hilton Hotel 8:30 - 12:00	Open	Open	PCDD/F in the Atmosphere	Bioanalytical Methods	Analytical	Toxaphene	Formation/ Emissions	Bioremed.	Open	Open
Westin Hotel 8:30 - 12:00	Opening Plenary Session		Fate of non-Dioxin Organohal.	Human Health Risk Assess. I	Human Exposure	Mechanism of Action	Toxicology II	Environ. Levels I	PCBs	National Overviews
Lunch Break: 12:00 - 1:30									Closing Ceremonies	
Hilton Hotel 1:30 - 4:20	Analytical Standards	Formation/ Treatment	PCDD/F in the Atmosphere	Bioanalytical Methods	Analytical	Toxaphene	Formation/ Emissions	Quality Control		
Westin Hotel 1:30 - 4:20	Ecotoxicol.	Metabolism	Fate of non-Dioxin Organohal.	Human Health Risk Assess. II	Human Exposure	Toxicology I	Toxicology III	Environ. Levels II		
Hilton Hotel 4:20 - 6:00	Exhibition Viewing		Poster Session I: Analytical		Poster Session II: Air/Sources/Levels		Open			
Westin Hotel 4:20 - 6:00			Poster Session I: Toxicology I/Fate		Poster Session II: Human Exposure/Levels		Poster Session III: Toxicology II/Formation/ Emissions/Combustion			
Evening Events	Open		Open		Conference Banquet Westin Hotel Ballroom		Dioxin Litigation Session Westin Hotel: Manitoba Room			

The technical program for the conference is shown in the figure below. This “Program at a Glance” shows how sessions were divided between the two conference hotels to minimize the inconvenience of delegates. In the Opening Plenary Session, the human health risks of the chlorinated dioxins and related compounds – especially as related to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reassessment – was the theme explored.



Opening Plenary Session at Dioxin '95 conference.
Seated are F. Karasek (L), O. Hutzinger, and C. Rappe (R).

One of the highlights of the conference was experienced in a Dioxin Litigation Session organized in a rare Thursday evening session. In the session, which included a mix of lawyers, academics, government, and industry personnel, discussion grew rather heated. Although all sides in the discussion would agree that protection of public health is of paramount importance, there were widely differing opinions concerning how this should be done, and even on the degree of hazard posed by the chlorinated dioxins and related compounds under various exposure scenarios. The session was a stark reminder of the purpose of the series of Dioxin symposia, and the significant amount of research that still remained to answer these important questions.

In addition to the regular technical program and special litigation session Thursday evening, professional training workshops were offered for the first time in the series of Dioxin Symposia. Although not part of the regular program, the opportunity to take advantage of the top level expertise attending the conference to provide training is one that should be taken advantage of.



Social Program

As in previous years, the Dioxin '95 social events revolved around the Sunday reception, and the conference banquet. This year, the banquet was on Wednesday evening, and revolved around a Canadian food theme. The picture below really does not do justice to the elegant meal, but delegates were well served in Edmonton.



Dioxin '95 banquet in the Westin hotel ballroom. If you look carefully, you can see Y. Masuda, O. Hutzinger, and G. Hunt.

Summary and Acknowledgements

Some 50-60 helpers, volunteers, and members of various planning and technical committees were needed to make Dioxin 1995 a success. About 190 platform and 170 poster presentations were delivered during the course of one week – covering virtually every aspect of dioxin/furan research. The Proceedings were published as volumes 23-26 of *Organohalogen Compounds*, for a total of 1930 printed pages of current research.

To accomplish the above, especially under the pressure of an accelerated planning schedule, is due to the dedicated efforts of all the Dioxin '95 volunteers. In addition, the financial contributions of sponsors and exhibitors – especially Alberta Environmental Protection, is gratefully acknowledged.