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LITTLE ROCK METROPOLITAN AREA

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# N.C. to Dig Up 52,000 Tons Of Tainted Soil

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina will dig up more than 250 miles of rural roadside contaminated by a chemical containing toxic polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) at a cost of as much as $2.5 million.

The excavation, and a search for a suitable site to permanently deposit the estimated 52,000 tons of tainted grass and soil, were announced Thursday by Governor Jim Hunt as the state's latest reaction to the mysterious spill found in 15 eastern and Piedmont North Carolina counties this month.

Hunt, calling the apparently deliberate spill a "dastardly act," also said county health officials will hand-deliver printed notices on the dangers of prolonged exposure to PCB to all residents of contaminated areas.

## To Post Signs

Signs will go up around all affected areas warning people to stay off the damaged soil until it is removed. However, Hunt repeated that health officials don't think the toxic material, dumped a violation of strict federal regulations on hazardous chemicals, poses an immediate medical threat.

"We do not, of course, know the long-term effects of PCBs on humans. That is why we must remove this material to protected and isolated sites," Hunt said.

Health officials say PCB, suspected as a possible cancer-causing agent when administered to laboratory animals in large doses, build up in human fatty tissues and may cause long-term health problems.

The PCB has been traced to a type manufactured in the late 1960s by Monsanto Chemical Corporation for use in electric transformers and capacitors. It is no longer produced.

Environmental Protection Agency enforcement director Paul J. Traina, in North Carolina to help in the investigation of the spill, said power companies are primary users of the substance but that they commonly have contracts with others for maintenance, hauling and disposal of PCB.