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Sunohio Develops Commercial Device That Destroys PCBs

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Sun Co., Ohio Transformer Venture Cracks Molecule And Then Rearranges It

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL *Staff Reporter*

CANTON, Ohio—Sunohio, a partnership between subsidiaries of Sun Co. of Radnor, Pa., and Ohio Transformer Corp. of Louisville, Ohio, said it has developed a portable, chemical process for destroying polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs.

The company, which conducts specialized maintenance on electrical substations, said it has completed testing on its first commercial unit and plans to demonstrate the device before the Environmental Protection Agency next month.

The process, called "PCBX," breaks apart the PCB molecule and rearranges it to form harmless or environmentally safe compounds, the company said. The process cleans transformer oils contaminated with PCBs, allowing them to be recycled, the company said.

PCBs, first used in the U.S. in 1929, were used primarily as fire-resistant insulating fluids in electrical transformers and capacitors until their manufacture was outlawed by the Toxic Substances Control Act in 1979. PCBs have been shown to cause cancer in laboratory animals and are suspected of causing cancer in man.

Sunohio said the PCBX system can be mounted on a 40-foot tractor-trailer and hauled directly to contaminated transformers and other sites of PCB contamination or storage.

Ohio Transformer owns about 80% of the venture; Sun owns 20%. Sun's Suntech Inc. unit conducted research on the process, and Ohio Transformer developed the concept.

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