

North Carolina To Get Cleanup Funds For PCB Spill

RALEIGH (AP) — North Carolina is among 44 states and territories that will split \$1.6 billion to clean up hazardous wastes, the Environmental Protection Agency announced Friday.

The EPA said the money will be used to help clean up multiple spills of hazardous PCB chemicals along 210 miles of state roadsides.

The state was in the last group on the list of the 114 worst hazardous waste sites in the country, ranked by priority of importance.

O.W. Strickland, head of North Carolina's solid and hazardous wastes program, said he was notified Friday morning that North Carolina was on the list.

Strickland said no funds have been allocated yet, and he does not know how much North Carolina will receive. He said he was told by federal officials that they will pay for

one project in each state, then allocate the rest of the money based on priority.

He said an environmental impact study estimated it would cost \$2 million to \$2.5 million to clean up North Carolina's roadsides. He said the money will be spent on cleanup in all 14 counties affected.

Robert E. "Buck" Ward, owner of Ward Transformer Co. in Raleigh, was sentenced to 2½ years in prison and fined \$200,000 earlier this year after he was convicted illegal dumping of PCB-laced oil from transformers. Three New York men who worked with Ward also were sentenced as a result of the chemical spills.

A \$12.5 million suit filed by the state to recover cleanup costs is pending.

PCBs, also known as polychlorinated biphenyls, are used in transformers. The chemical has been linked to can-

cer in humans. Signs have been posted along the shoulders of affected roads to warn motorists.

The release of the list was the first step in the five-year federal cleanup program.

The 114 waste dumps nationwide were judged by the EPA to pose the greatest potential threat to public health and therefore were put on this priority list to obtain money from the \$1.6 billion "Superfund" established by Congress last year.

EPA Administrator Anne Gorsuch, who has been criticized by environmentalists for delay in using the fund, said the priority list represented a "milestone" in implementing the program. She said it showed that the Reagan administration was "committed to the cleanup of hazardous waste sites as quickly and effectively as possible."

The Superfund was established by Congress in December 1980 in response to a public outcry over such disasters as the Love Canal in New York, where hundreds of families were forced to evacuate their homes because of leakage from an abandoned dump site.

The fund will provide money to aid in cleaning up the worst of an estimated 9,600 abandoned and current dump sites that officials fear represent health threats to the public.

EPA officials said the 114 sites announced Friday were selected through a "hazard-scoring system," which rated the dumps as to their potential public health threat and pollution dangers.

The 114 sites were chosen from an initial list of 282 recommended for cleanup action this summer by the states and EPA's 10 regional offices.