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clean septic tanks. That use could also be banned under TSCA Section 6, Martin P. Halper, director of the exposure evaluation division in the toxics office, told BNA in an interview Oct. 1.

OTS also hopes to develop information on how fertilizers may be contributing to groundwater contamination, Halper said.

However, he said before EPA issues a rule requiring the information under Section 8 of TSCA, it must determine what products are being put into septic tanks and what solvents they contain. Then the agency will devise an environmental fate model to determine if the solvents are entering groundwater, according to Halper.

EPA has planned the work for fiscal 1986, he said.

Section 8 Ban Said Possible

If solvents are found to be entering groundwater from degreasing fluids used to clean septic tanks, EPA may require manufacturers and processors to provide such information as:

- ▶ What substances are in the fluids;
- ▶ What volume of the fluids are produced each year; and
- ▶ Where and how they are sold.

In lieu of a Section 8 reporting rule, EPA may conduct surveys to determine components of degreasers or may seek to cooperate with trade groups to get information and solve any problems that stem from using degreasers in septic tanks, Halper said.

Ultimately, EPA could ban the sale of some of the septic tank products under Section 6 of TSCA, he said.

OTS intends that its study of degreasers in septic tanks will help create a methodology EPA can follow in determining whether TSCA can be used to regulate other sources of groundwater contamination, Halper said.

In 1984, the agency was considering using the superfund law to control the spread of pesticides that have migrated into groundwater (Current Report, Sept. 21, 1984, p. 627).

Hazardous Substances

SEPARATE OSHA FORMALDEHYDE STANDARD ASKED FOR CONSTRUCTION; ASBESTOS PROPOSAL CRITIQUED

A separate formaldehyde standard for the construction industry should be developed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, according to a recommendation by the agency's Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health.

Draft proposals on formaldehyde and asbestos were discussed by committee members at Sept. 26 and 27 meetings. The formaldehyde proposal would reduce the current exposure limit for the construction industry from 5 parts per million to 1 ppm. The asbestos proposal for construction would set a permissible exposure limit of 0.2 fibers per cubic centimeter of air (Current Report, Sept. 27, pp. 712, 713).

The committee approved a resolution that OSHA "develop a separate construction standard for formaldehyde that incorporates the recommendations of the subcommittee on health and safety, including the promulgation of a generic health standard."

The recommendations included eliminating the word "unintentional" from the definition of emergency as "any occurrence leading to the unintentional release of quantities of formaldehyde likely to produce exposure exceeding the permissible exposure limit."

Another recommendation was to add language under the medical surveillance section that would include employees,

in addition to employers, as recipients of written opinions from examining physicians.

During the public comment period at the meeting, Rodney Wolford, International Brotherhood of Painters and Allied Trades, testified on the need for a short term exposure limit for construction because of the "rise and fall" in exposure there, as opposed to a more uniform exposure in general industry. Because construction jobs are often of short duration, it is possible for a worker to receive a massive dose of formaldehyde, be removed from the job for the rest of the day, and still have exposures beneath the permissible limit, based on an eight-hour time weighted average, Wolford asserted.

Asbestos Standard

On asbestos, George Smith, safety director, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, called OSHA's proposed exposure limit "unconscionable." Even a level of 0.1 f/cc is hazardous, he remarked.

However, Edward Baier, acting director of OSHA's health standards program, called the "close" difference between 0.2 f/cc and 0.1 f/cc "just statistics." Arbitrary sampling procedures can result in different numbers for the same exposure, he explained.

Other committee objections to the proposal addressed requirements that:

- ▶ Employers inform employees of results of monitoring "as soon as possible following receipt" rather than "immediately."
- ▶ Under removal, demolition, or renovation operations, a decontamination area be established "except for small scale, short duration maintenance operations."
- ▶ Employers engaged in asbestos work above the action level for 30 or more days per year must institute a medical surveillance program. Committee members questioned what would happen to employees who worked for such employers, but not for 30 days a year.

Hazard Communication

Early in the meeting, Acting OSHA Administrator Patrick Tyson noted the agency plans to publish an advance notice of proposed rulemaking within a month on expanding the scope of the hazard communication standard beyond the manufacturing sector. The expansion will "directly impact" on the construction industry, he noted, since many of the supplies a contractor needs are purchased at hardware stores.

How material safety data sheets will flow from the hardware store to the worksite is one of the problems OSHA is considering, he said.

Hazardous Waste

EPA PROPOSES ELIMINATING RCRA EXCLUSIONS FOR SEVERAL MINERAL, ORE PROCESSING WASTES

A number of ore and mineral processing wastes and six smelting wastes would be regulated as hazardous under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, according to an Environmental Protection Agency rule proposed Oct. 2. Changes to RCRA enacted in 1980 removed the wastes from regulation under an exclusion for mining wastes.

The six wastes proposed for relisting as hazardous result from the primary processing of copper, lead, zinc, and aluminum ores and from the production of ferroalloys, according to EPA. Wastes proposed for relisting include wastewater treatment sludges and wastes slated for recycling (50 FR 40292).