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N.C. Checks Suspected PCB Truck

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From Daily News Wire Reports

North Carolina investigators were in Palmyra, N.Y., Friday examining an impounded tank truck at state police barracks there to determine if it is the same truck witnesses said sprayed toxic chemicals along 270 miles of highways in North Carolina.

Robert J. Burns, president of the Transformer-Sales Co. and alleged owner of the truck, declined to comment Friday on suspicions his company dumped the chemicals, called PCBs, in North Carolina. But he said his firm had done nothing illegal by storing the chemical in an Allegany, N.Y., warehouse.

"This thing is so twisted and screwed up it is unreal," Burns said from his home in Lakewood, N.Y. "I got it (PCBs) from all over the country, and it is perfectly legal."

New York authorities, however, have ordered him to get rid of the forty-five 55-gallon barrels of PCB-laced oil he has stored at his plant.

Meanwhile, local school superintendents met in Raleigh Friday to talk about the problem of school children standing on road shoulders contaminated with toxic chemicals while waiting for school buses, but they did not come up with any final solution to the problem.

"If a child stands in the contaminated area for five days a week for six months, there is no concern," said Dr. J.N. MacCormack, head of the state health division's communicable disease branch.

Nonetheless, MacCormack said, it would be a good idea to keep kids out of the areas as much as possible.

By this afternoon, all PCB-contaminated areas will have been sprayed with charcoal which deactivates the chemicals, according to Bob Adams of the Department of Transportation. When sites have been selected and machinery developed, the contaminated soil will be removed and buried.

State officials, however, are still trying to figure out where they will bury the contaminated soil. There are only three places in the country where the Environmental Protection Agency will allow the dumping and burial of PCBs. The nearest to North Carolina is in Louisiana.

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