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Subject: Government Stops use of PCB

On Tuesday, March 21 the Japanese Government (MITI) ordered 23 industrial organizations to discontinue use of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB). The order follows weeks of controversy during which PCB was found in the milk of nursing mothers. The notification by MITI requested the industries to suspend production of electric appliances and parts containing PCB by September 1 of this year. As a result of the ban, manufacturers are expected to switch from PCB to mineral oil. The use of PCB in paints and carbon-paper was prohibited in February, 1972 and December, 1971 respectively. Some firms will be able to continue using PCB for special applications, but the devices must be labeled as containing PCB. The firms who will be manufacturing devices outside the MITI ban will be required to report to MITI in advance as to the facilities they will install to facilitate the treatment and disposal of PCB-containing waste.

Following the MITI announcement, the Sharp Corporation said it would entirely replace all PCB containing parts by the end of May in their electric appliance manufacturing operations. Sharp believes that the use of a substitute for PCB will not lead to any increase in production costs.

M.J. Moore
Scientific Representative

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