EPA Is Admonished To Tighten Standards On Certain Chemicals

WASHINGTON (UPI)—A federal appeals court admonished the Environmental Protection Agency for its failure to act more effectively to eliminate such "life threatening chemicals" as the cancer-causing PCBs.

In a ruling setting aside some EPA regulations implementing the Toxic Substances Control Act, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia told the agency to reconsider some of its regulations governing the use of polychlorinated biphenyls.

In use commercially for 50 years, PCBs are frequently used in electrical transformers and are valued for their fire and electrical resistance. They aren't manufactured currently but are by-products of some industrial chemical processes.

The EPA's regulations were challenged by the Environmental Defense Fund on the ground that there was insufficient evidence for the government agency to exempt from regulation all materials containing concentrations of PCBs below 50 parts per million, and to classify certain uses of the chemicals as exempt from regulation.

The appeals court agreed, although it said there were substantial evidence in the record to support the EPA's decision to allow continued use of certain types of materials containing PCBs.

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