

From: PEIRCE, BOB [AG/1000] [/O=MONSANTO/OU=NA-1000-01/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=819117]
Sent: 3/26/2010 6:18:43 PM
To: HELSCHER, THOMAS M [AG/1000] [thomas.m.helscher@monsanto.com]
Subject: PCBs in schools

This is the sleeper issue, again.

Schools Chosen for PCB Study

March 25, 2010 [by MIREYA NAVARRO, New York Times]

Theme: Persistent Organic Pollutants/Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxics

Issue Area: POPs/PBTs

Importance: **High**

Chlorine Industry - Neutral

Pickups: 1

City and federal officials have chosen five schools, one in each borough, for a pilot study to assess the environmental risks posed by

PCBs in school buildings.

The schools, chosen based on their **PCB** contamination or their potential for it, are Public School 3 in Staten Island, Public School 199 in

Manhattan, Public School 309 in Brooklyn, Public School 178 in the Bronx and Public School 183 in Queens.

The study, announced in January, is the result of an agreement between the city and the federal Environmental Protection Agency to

address potential violations of the Toxic Substances Control Act related to **PCBs** in caulk. The city had found unsafe concentrations of

PCBs — above the allowable level of 50 parts per million — during construction and renovation projects.

The testing is expected to start this year after the New York City School Construction Authority submits an implementation schedule, said

Elias Rodriguez, a spokesman for the Environmental Protection Agency. Federal officials said the study should eventually lead to a plan

for cleanups and for reducing potential **exposure** that can serve as a model for a citywide approach and for other school districts around

the county.

PCBs, or **polychlorinated biphenyls**, are a class of highly toxic chemical compounds widely used in construction materials and

electrical products in many buildings from the 1950s until their phase-out in 1978. Long-term **exposure** when **PCBs** are released from

the caulk into the air, or through direct contact, can result in **cancer** and affect immune and reproductive systems.

Legislators in Albany have also introduced a bill that would require testing of the caulk in doors and windows for **PCBs** in all school buildings in the city built or renovated between 1950 and 1980. Advocates say such caulk sampling is more reliable than the air, soil and dust testing to be conducted in the pilot study, which calls for caulk testing only when sampling exceeds certain levels of **PCB** contamination.

“It’s good that they’re doing a pilot project but it’s my firm belief that it’s the government’s responsibility to ensure that students and everyone who works in a school building are not **exposed** to harmful contaminants,” said Assemblywoman Linda B. Rosenthal, a sponsor of the bill whose district includes one of the schools in the pilot study, P.S. 199 on the Upper West Side.

“I want to ensure the safety of students in every school building.”