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Tanner Asks Burial Of PCB Matter

LANSING (UPI) — The state's top environmental official has recommended use of sealed landfills to dispose of harmful PCB-containing materials banned under House-passed legislation nearing action on the Senate floor.

Howard Tanner, director of the Department of Natural Resources, said Thursday he is disappointed that the sole U.S. manufacturer of the chemical — the Monsanto Co. — is not offering complete disposal facilities to go along with its plan to stop producing PCB.

The only good alternative Tanner told the Senate Conservation Committee, is an "extremely carefully constructed sealed landfill" with clay barriers preventing any PCB from escaping.

One of the major concerns of legislators is that few adequate disposal facilities exist, while conventional disposal would result in greater environmental contamination.

Conservation Committee members said they expect to send the bill to the full Senate early next week. It prohibits Michigan businesses from selling, manufacturing or using polychlorinated biphenyl or an item containing 250,000 parts per million of the chemical as of July 1.

By Jan. 1, 1978, no item containing more than 100 parts per million could be used in Michigan, with the exception of sealed electrical systems which could be phased out gradually.

PCB has found thousands of commericial and industrial uses since it was introduced in 1929. The chemical has been linked to the deaths of Great Lakes fish and wildlife and poses a potential threat to human health.

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