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terrifying

MILLIONS of Americans are threatened by a dangerous industrial chemical which causes brain damage, cancer and deformities in children.

An alarming report by the Environmental Protection Agency has revealed that the chemical, PCB, is present in the bodies of half the U.S. population — about 100 million people.

The chemical is still being dumped into the country's major waterways and is present in nearly every body of water in the U.S., according to the E.P.A.

PCB is a chlorinated hydrocarbon used by industries throughout the world because of its resistance to heat. In the U.S. it is used extensively in air conditioners and industrial electrical transformers.

By ROGER LANGLEY

Congressman Richard Ottinger (D-N.Y.) told The Star this week: "The EPA estimates that 34 percent of the American population have from 1 to 3 parts per million of PCB in their fatty tissues."

A fish containing more than 5 PPM is considered too dangerous to eat by the Food and Drug Administration.

The biggest PCB disaster so far occurred in Yusho Japan, in 1968, when 1,200 people were stricken after eating rice oil contaminated with the chemical.

They were covered with sores and disorders and many died soon after birth to a high percentage of children delivered died deformed.

Contaminated oilseed Scientists named the condition after their term — Yusho disease.

In the U.S., the biggest PCB risk is New York's Hudson River. The E.P.A. says that two General Electric plants at Hudson Falls and Fort Edward were discharging at least 20 pounds of the chemical into the river every day.

But experts warn that every part of the U.S. is contaminated by PCB.

It is a national problem, said assistant Secretary of the Interior Nathaniel P. Reed. "I am deeply disturbed by the pervasiveness of PCB.

"I am very troubled by the elevated [illegible] found in fish in our drainage basins and I do not mean just the Hudson and the rest on Great Lakes — words but the Mississippi and Columbia Rivers and Chesapeake Bay."

Hudson	100 PPM
Ohio River	10
Raritan River (Illinois)	10
Yazoo River (Miss.)	10
Allegheny (N.Y.-Pa.)	10
Cape Fear (N.C.)	10
Tallapoosa (Ala.)	10
Delaware River	9

PPM — parts per million. Based on tests made on fish from these rivers by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Even the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers in the Midwest, the Columbia River system in the Northwest, the Rio Grande and other Gulf coast streams — even the Yukon in Alaska.

U.S. experiments with rats have shown that PCB causes liver cancer. In one experiment, eight female rats were fed 2.5 PPM of PCB for six months and then mated with normal male rats. Of the eight pregnancies, each three baby monkeys survived and they are all [illegible]

Dr. Renate D. Kimbrough of the U.S. Public Health Service, said The Star: "ingestion of PCB in humans must be curtailed."

A spokesman for the EPA, Martin Pfannerer, said that the federal government already has "elaborate plans for PCB control."

"We have begun to charge the water discharger permits for 20 manufacturers who use PCB to stop them from discharging into waterways. We are not going to allow them to dump any."

EPA director Russell Train in meeting with the presidents of the companies involved to discuss the total elimination of PCB use and the finding of possible substitutes.

Train also plans to meet with the presidents of major utility companies and reportedly that use transformers containing PCB to discuss ways the power producers so that they won't be thrown into public landfills where they can break and seep into the water table.

But many environmentalists are worried that a great deal of damage has already been done.

According to E.P.A. records, a transformer leak on a railroad dumped between 10 and 100 pounds of PCB in Pennsylvania on April, 1971.

And in July 1971, a similar accident occurred in Stamford, Conn.

Some 200 gallons of PCB were spilled from a truck in Kingston, Tenn. in March 1972 C.E. when it was dropping the chemical, [illegible] feet to recover it from the saturated earth and put it in 11 [illegible] drums.

On March 17 1971, an Air Force electrical transformer fire blew a [illegible] at Seattle, Washington and [illegible] pounds of PCB into the Duwamish River. It is still being cleaned up at a cost of about $800 000.

PCB is being used to contaminate thousands in other ways. In cities in New York, several [illegible] have been drained, PCB from old [illegible] fixtures and flowing it into [illegible] oil and sealing the manhole so maintenance men [illegible] to put on masks to keep down dust. There is also a report that PCB soak [illegible] so [illegible] runways in Maryland to reduce [illegible] as an [illegible]

Assistant Interior Secretary Reed added: "I am [illegible] disgusted by the growth of [illegible] washing and dumping of [illegible] The approach is much [illegible] [illegible] recommendations [illegible] the Secretary of [illegible] that people — not an [illegible]