[illegible] 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.

By ROGER LANGLEY

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

Congressman Richard Ottinger (D-N.Y.) told the Senate this week: "The E.P.A. estimates that 30 percent of the American population have from 3 to 5 parts per million of PCB in their fatty tissues. A body-burden more than 5 PPM is considered too dangerous for us 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 made violently sick after eating rice oil contaminated with the chemical.

They suffered from chloracne skin and eye disorders, liver and joint disorders, the loss of stamina and sex drives. Pregnant women gave birth to a high percentage of stillborn, deformed and underweight infants. Scientists warned: "The symptoms after these years — Yusho disease."

In the U.S. the highest PCB reading was found in New York's Hudson River. The E.P.A. says that four General Electric plants at Hudson Falls and Fort Edward were discharging at least 30 pounds of the chemical into the river every day.

But traces of it are found in every part of the U.S. is contaminated by PCB.

It is a colorless, practically odorless and almost tasteless liquid. It is so stable that it does not break down in the environment and it does not dissolve in the polluted waters of the Hudson and the other industrial waterways.

Instead it seeps into the sediment at the bottom of rivers and lakes and is absorbed by the plankton and other microscopic organisms which are the first link in the food chain.

Fish eat the plankton and other fish and the PCB builds up in their fatty tissues. Scientists call this "biological magnification."

Dr. Ronald D. Kerbrough of the U.S. Public Health Service told The Star: "Ingestion of PCB in humans must be curtailed."

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

"We have begun to change the water discharge permits for 36 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 is meeting with the presidents of the companies involved to discuss the total elimination of PCB use and the finding of possible substitutes.

From state to state, to meet with the specialists of major utility companies, and railroads that use transformers containing PCB to discuss waste disposal practices so that they won't be thrown into public landfills where they can break down and seep into the water table.

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

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

And in July 1975 a similar accident occurred in Stamford, Conn.

Some 600 gallons of PCB were spilled from a truck in Kingston, Tenn. in March 1972. G.E. which was stopping the chemical from 11.7 million tons to recover it from the saturated earth and put it in 10,000 sealed drums.

On March 17 1974 an Air Force electrical transformer fell from a plane in Seattle, Wash., and spilled 324 gallons of PCB in the Duwamish River. It is still being cleaned up at a cost of about $2M.

PCB is being used to contaminate the earth in other ways. In areas of New York state, cows have been dying after PCB from old transformers and dumps have seeped into the water supplies. Farmers are being told not to use the water for drinking purposes. There is a belief that PCB was used on city streets in Maryland to reduce dusting in the summer.

Scientists have been [illegible] exposed [illegible] to the [illegible] described in the [illegible] of [illegible] making and refining of [illegible] U.S. [illegible] scientists which have [illegible] the [illegible] re-examination [illegible] [illegible] the health risk [illegible] [illegible] can produce [illegible] on our [illegible]

Hudson [illegible]	263 PPM*
Ohio River	138
Merrimac River (Mass.)	98
Yazoo River (Miss.)	73
Allegheny (N.Y.-Pa.)	35
Cape Fear (N.C.)	28
Tuscumbia (Ala.)	25
Delaware River	19

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

From the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers in the Midwest, the Columbia River system in the Northwest, the San Francisco Bay area, the Rio Grande and other Gulf Coast streams, even the Yukon in Alaska.

U.S. experiments with fish have shown that PCB causes many failures in one experiment, eight female trout have been fed 3.5 PPM of PCB [illegible] months and then mated with [illegible] [illegible] of the eggs produced [illegible] [illegible] and they are all [illegible]

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