PCB

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Committee votes to ban use of chemical PCB in state

From The Globe Democrat Springfield, Ill., Bureau

SPRINGFIELD, ILL. — A House committee has unanimously voted to ban the use of the chemical PCB which has been linked to disease in humans.

PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, are used in the manufacture of paints, inks, paper, plastics and many other products. Most PCBs are manufactured by Monsanto Corp. in Sauget, Ill.

The measure, passed Thursday by the House Committee on Environment, Energy and Natural Resources, now goes before the full House.

Under the bill, the Illinois Pollution Control Board would regulate the sale of the chemical or items containing substantial amounts of it within Illinois. It would not, however, restrict Monsanto's shipment of PCBs to other states.

PCBs have been found in commercial fish in Lake Michigan and health officials in some states have cautioned against eating the fish regularly.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has concluded that "PCBs constitute a significant hazard to human health and the environment and must be immediately and effectively controlled with every means at our disposal."

PCBs were blamed in 1968 when 1,000 Japanese developed Yusho disease, which caused nervous disorders and, among pregnant women, led to miscarriages, stillbirths and birth defects.

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