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Four workers sue over PCB contamination at Redding plant

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REDDING (UPI) — The operator of a Shasta County sawmill and plywood plant is the target of a $4 million damage suit filed by four workers who charge they were contaminated by PCB, the toxic electrical insulating chemical.

The Superior Court suit contends that Champion International Corp., based in Stamford, Conn., knew the chemical was "extremely dangerous and hazardous" but failed to warn the workers about the risk.

Spokesman John Hanson at Champion's regional office in Portland, Ore., said yesterday that a capacitor had leaked in the Anderson plant warehouse in November 1980, spilling about a half-pint of PCB-laden fluid. But he said it was considered a "minor health hazard" at the time.

The workers — Bob Toney, John Young, Paul Roberts and Steve Meeks — say they were exposed to polychlorinated biphenyls between Oct. 27 and Oct. 30, 1980. They said they were "rendered sick, sore and lame" as a result of their exposure during the separation of used electrical parts in a company warehouse.

Roberts resigned Oct. 1 but the three other plaintiffs still work for Champion, said Doug Caley, employee relations manager for the company.

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