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PCB output is changed due to pollution issue

Japan's two principal producers of polychlorinate biphenyl (PCB), which has been judged to be a serious environmental pollutant, last week said they had stopped producing the more dangerous "open" type of the compound earlier this year.

Kanegafuchi Chemical Industry Co. and Mitsubishi Monsanto Chemical Co., a joint Japanese-American enterprise, also said they will continue to make the less dangerous "closed" type but will reclaim whatever disused amount of it that can be retrieved from users and burn it.

The "open" type of PCB is used for production of paints and photosensitive or pressure-sensitive paper, and the "closed" type for making of electric insulating oil. Oil for transformers, capacitors and other items is tightly enclosed in metal or other casings.

Early last year, Monsanto Co., the sole PCB producer and supplier in the U.S. and Britain, stopped making and selling the open type.

In West Germany, Farbenfabriken Bayer A.G., supplying that kind of the compound throughout West Europe, has expressed its readiness to do likewise by the end of this year.

This means the open type of PCB will go out of industrial use practically throughout the world as it poses a health problem to birds, fish and even human beings.

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