faster than other systems in use, but that the present sensitivities for some chemicals, such as phosphorus and ammonia, are too high for EPA use at this time. Elly said that the system is good for highly polluted water, but not for clean water. EPA has been testing the IQAS for the last four to six months.

Elly said that if purchased the instrument would be used by EPA primarily to test lake water, rather than water samples required for granting a National Pollutant Discharge elimination system permit.

John Wilson, of the Department of the Interior's Geological Survey laboratory at Denver, Colo. said that USGS has purchased one of the machines, and is continuing testing of another one at this time.

Wilson said that the instrument is being used on a "broad range of natural water samples," such as lake water. USGS decided to purchase the machine primarily because the speed at which the tests are done compensates for its inability to do multiple testing simultaneously.

Radiation

EPA ISSUES TECHNICAL REPORT ON GUIDANCE FOR TRU EXPOSURE

The Environmental Protection Agency issued a technical report containing its responses to all comments received on its proposed radiation protection dose guidelines for persons exposed to transuranic elements in the environment (44 FR 61104).

The guidelines were proposed in the Federal Register on November 30, 1977 (42 FR 60954). The final guidelines, which currently are awaiting the signature of EPA Administrator Douglas M. Costle, will be subject to Presidential approval and would apply to all federal agencies which have statutory authority for producing or using transuranic elements, or licensing or regulating such activities.

The guidelines would limit the radiation dose the general population may receive from exposure to transuranic elements to one millirad per year to the lung and three millirad annually to the bone (Current Developments, September 21, p. 1197).

Single copies of the technical report, EPA 520/4-78-010, are available upon request from Gordon Burley, Environmental Standards Branch Chief, Criteria and Standards Division, Office of Radiation Programs (ANR-460), EPA, Washington, D.C. 20460, or telephone (703) 557-8610.

General Policy

EPA ADVISORY PANEL PLANS MEETING TO DISCUSS CADMIUM REPORT, SLUDGE RULES

The Science Advisory Board's study group on cadmium in sludges will hold a meeting November 7 to discuss a draft report by the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Research and Development (ORD) on the human health effects on cadmium (44 FR 61105).

The group is expected to focus on ORD's support of proposed interim regulations for land application of treatment plant sludges (Current Developments, September 21, 1183).

Persons wishing to attend the meeting, which will be held at 9 a.m. in room 2117 of Waterside Mall, 401 M St., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460, should contact Joel Fisher at (202) 472-9444, by November 5.

Copies of the health effects document may be obtained from Richard Marland, in EPA's R&D office at (202) 755-2532.

Economic Analysis Subcommittee Meeting

SAB's Economic Analysis Subcommittee also is planning to meet November 20 to prepare a report to EPA on "The Potential Role of Economic Analysis in Environmental Policy" (44 FR 61105).

Person wishing to attend, participate, or obtain information concerning the meeting, which will be held at 9 a.m. in room 1101 West Tower at the above address, should contact Douglas B. Sebb on (202) 472-9444 by November 16.

Chemicals

HAZARDS OF PCBs CALLED OVERBLOWN, CAUSING NEEDLESS DISPOSAL PROBLEMS

TAMPA, Fla. — (By an Environment Reporter staff correspondent) — The hazards of PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) are overblown, causing needless disposal problems, according to scientists, engineers, and Environmental Protection Agency officials speaking at a hazardous waste management seminar.

PCBs are a "political pollutant" — a substance which EPA, the Food and Drug Administration, or some other federal agency has banned, resulting in no one wanting to touch, or dispose of the material, said John Dickinson, chief of the hazardous waste section of EPA Region IV in Atlanta, Ga. Dickinson told the October 15-19 seminar, sponsored by the Toxic Substances Control Institute, that "political pollutants" are ones which can be safely and securely disposed of, but ones which industry does not want to handle or "take the heat" from society for disposal.

Dickinson said the reason for concern about PCBs is that the substance is bioaccumulative and persistent in the environment and does not break down into simpler chemicals.

Dickinson said, however, that other chemicals are much more dangerous than PCBs, but just have not received the media attention that PCBs have.

He said that incineration of PCBs is the "sleeping giant" because EPA has not yet begun evaluating emissions from burning PCBs, and EPA does not know the products of its combustion.

PCBs Caught in Political Controversy

Dickinson's views were supported by Raymond D. Harbison, director of the toxic substances control laboratory at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. Harbison said PCBs are totally immobile and not carcinogenic to humans. According to Harbison, benzpyrene and other chemicals are far more hazardous to humans and the environment than PCBs and are proven human carcinogens.

Harbison pointed to many cases of human ingestion of PCBs without resulting carcinogenic side effects.

An April 1979 EPA environmental impact statement and economic impact analysis of the PCB regulations said that PCBs are carcinogenic to rats and mice and "pose a carcinogenic risk to man."

"The hysteria and money spent over PCBs are not worth the human health effects," Harbison said. "I see no reason why we are having problems disposing of PCB," he said in referring to industry problems in obtaining PCB disposal permits because of public opposition to disposal facilities.

PCBs, the only substance specifically outlawed by Congress in the Toxic Substances Control Act, are the target of very strict federal disposal regulations.

Robert Landmesser, president of Advanced Environmental Technology Corp., Morrisplains, N.J., recommended that industry get rid of its transformers and capacitors containing PCBs as soon as possible. Many seminar participants

Copyright © 1979 by The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc
0013-8211/79/$00.50

MONS 011845

from industry said they had large quantities of PCBs stored onsite and were looking for permanent ways to dispose of the substance.

Industry Must Police Itself

Industry must police its own hazardous waste transportation and disposal activities more than it ever has in the past, according to Landmesser.

Landmesser said increased federal enforcement of EPA's soon-to-be released hazardous waste regulations (Current Developments, October 10, p. 1423) and the Department of Transportation's hazardous materials handling rules will be an incentive for industry to police itself to avoid expensive prosecution and violations.

According to Landmesser, of all the federal agencies his firm comes in contact with, DOT has the strongest and largest enforcement staff to deal with the hazardous materials handling regulations. He said that DOT intends to upgrade its enforcement staff for the regulations. He said that, because DOT's hazardous materials handling regulations are strong, consistent, and already on the books, unlike EPA's yet-to-be-released hazardous waste regulations, firms must comply with all aspects of the DOT regulations. "Compliance with DOT's [hazardous materials handling] regulations is imperative from top to bottom," Landmesser said.

Landmesser recommended that industries not mix different types of their wastes into one waste stream. "Classification and separation of materials will be most important for offsite disposal," he said.

Landmesser also said that industry generally has "not had a consistent moral hazardous waste policy." He said in the past industry may have been disposing of its wastes legally under then-existing laws, but quite often industry knew it was polluting groundwater and land and endangering the environment (April 13, p. 2326). He said industry has been legally, but not morally, correct in the way it handled hazardous wastes.

Discussions at the seminar also focused on the difficulty of siting hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities.

Wilsonville Case Will Have Far-Reaching Effects

The recent court decision prohibiting continued operation of Illinois' Wilsonville hazardous waste landfill, whose operation the EPA supported, will have far-reaching effects on the siting and operation of hazardous waste disposal sites, said Jeffrey R. Diver, counsel for environmental affairs of Waste Management, Inc., of Oak Brook, Ill.

Diver said the court decision to keep the site closed under nuisance law (October 5, p. 1277) was based on "very little evidence" that the site posed a potential harm to the area. He said the decision goes far beyond the disposal of hazardous wastes and is a considerable extension of the principle of nuisance.

Diver said that present common tort law is adequate for dealing with causes of actions arising out of hazardous waste disposal and abandoned hazardous waste sites.

Water Pollution

GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY MAY BE RECOVERING MORE RAPIDLY, SAYS NOAA

Water quality in the Great Lakes may show improvement much faster than originally expected if predictions based on a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration computer model analysis are accurate.

Dr. Steven Chapra of NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Laboratory in Ann Arbor, Michigan, calculated the largest of the Great Lakes may be cleaner in one-tenth of the time predicted in earlier studies and Lake Erie may show improvement in less than one year, NOAA said October 29.

Chapra's calculations are based on a model that simulates the effects of phosphorous in the Great Lakes and the results of pollution abatement efforts. NOAA said Chapra includes sedimentation as a natural cleansing mechanism of the lakes, a factor which was ignored in earlier studies.

Although earlier studies concluded it might take centuries for pollution abatement efforts to show water quality improvements in Lake Michigan and Lake Superior, Chapra's studies show the longest time for water quality recovery from a dose of phosphorous is 32 years for Lake Superior. NOAA said Chapra's calculations show Lake Erie could readjust after phosphorous inflows in less than a year; Lakes Ontario and Huron would take nearly eight years, and Lake Michigan would take 13 years.

Chapra calculated that the amount of phosphorous added to Lake Ontario has dropped from 16,500 tons a year in 1972 to a current rate of about 11,000 tons. Overall, he estimated that phosphorous loadings have dropped about 25 percent by 1978 after peak loadings experienced in the spring of 1975, NOAA said.

General Policy

ADVISORY PANELS PLAN MEETINGS ON TOXIC WASTES, MONITORING PROGRESS

Hazardous waste disposal issues will be discussed at a two-day meeting to be held by the executive committee of the Environmental Protection Agency's Science Advisory Board November 5-6 (44 FR 60157).

The committee also will be briefed by EPA's Office of Research and Development on its new policies and procedures for reviewing and awarding research grants and cooperative agreements (Current Developments, October 12, p. 1351).

The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. on both days in room 1101 West Tower, 401 M St., S.W., Washington, D.C.

Persons wishing to attend should contact Richard M. Dowd, SAB director, at (202) 755-0293 by October 29.

Environmental Measurements Committee Meets

The monitoring progress of EPA's Environmental Monitoring and Support Laboratory in Research Triangle Park will be evaluated at the November 13 and 15 meeting of the Environmental Measurements Committee (44 FR 60157).

The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. in room N303 of the laboratory in RTP, N.C.

Persons wishing to attend, participate, or obtain additional information should contact Douglas Bebel, Executive Secretary, on (202) 472-9044 by November 5.

Impact Statements

CEQ DRAWS UP LIST OF AGENCIES WITH ENVIRONMENTAL JURISDICTION

The Council on Environmental Quality October 19 proposed a list of federal and federal/state agencies, with jurisdiction by law or special expertise on environmental issues (44 FR 60353). The list is intended to ease agency compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the CEQ regulations in preparation of environmental impact statements (44 FR 60353).

NEPA regulations define "jurisdiction by law" in Section 1508.15 as authority to approve, veto, or finance all or part