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U.S. EPA CITES MACEDONIA FIRM FOR PCB VIOLATIONS

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has cited a Macedonia, Ohio firm for improperly handling toxic polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and is seeking $41,500 in penalties.

"Industrial Castings, Inc., 635 E. Hiland Rd., was cited with four violations of federal regulations under the Toxic Substances Control Act dealing with the manufacture, use and disposal of this dangerous chemical," said John McGuire, midwest regional administrator.

An April 9 inspection by the EPA discovered that the firm had failed to test five die-casting machines contaminated with more than 425 gallons of PCB-laden hydraulic fluid. PCB concentrations greater than 50 parts per million, the legal limit, were detected in each piece of equipment.

Regulations required firms to test their machinery for residual PCB levels not later than Nov. 1, 1979.

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EX P-3283
Page 1 of 2

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According to the complaint, an estimated 55 gallons of PCB contaminated waste oil was being disposed of improperly monthly, proper records on PCB disposal practices were not kept and that the firm failed to correctly label equipment contaminated with the chemical.

The EPA has proposed a $13,000 penalty for failing to test, $17,000 for improper PCB disposal, $10,000 for inadequate record keeping and $1,500 for not identifying PCB-laden machinery.

PCBs, a suspected carcinogen, have been linked to reproductive failures, gastric disorders, skin lesions and tumors in laboratory tested animals. Effects on humans include various skin disorders, digestive disturbances, jaundice, throat and respiratory irrations and severe headaches.

Unlike most organic chemicals, PCBs do not readily breakdown but bioaccumulate in living organisms and move up the food chain.

Industrial Castings has 15 days to respond to the complaint or request a hearing on the allegations.

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