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Sealed Landfills Suggested For PCB Materials

LANSING (UPI) — The state's top environmental official has recommended use of sealed landfills to dispose of harmful PCB-containing materials banned under Hanse-passed legislation awaiting action on the Senate floor.

Howard Tanner, director of the Department of Natural Resources, said Thursday he is disappointed that the sole U.S. manufacturer of the chemical — the Monsanto Co. — is not offering complete disposal facilities to go along with its plan to stop producing PCB.

The only good alternative, Tanner told the Senate Conservation Committee, is an "extremely carefully constructed, sealed landfill" with clay barriers preventing any PCB from escaping.

One of the major concerns of legislators is that few adequate disposal facilities exist, while conventional disposal would result in greater environmental contamination.

Conservation Committee members said they expect to send the bill to the full Senate early next week. It prohibits Michigan businesses from selling, manufacturing or using polychlorinated biphenyl or an item containing 250,000 parts per million of the chemical as of July 1.

By Jan. 1, 1978, no item containing more than 100 parts per million could be used in Michigan, with the exception of sealed electrical systems which could be phased out gradually.

PCB has found thousands of commercial and industrial uses since it was introduced in 1930. The chemical has been linked to the deaths of Great Lakes fish and wildlife and poses a potential threat to human health.

PULASKI, N. Y.
DEMOCRAT
W. 2,900

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Zagame reports possible solution to PCB problem

Assemblyman John R. Zagame has recently stated his belief that "a national solution to the difficult environmental problems caused by the chemical PCB is at last in sight."

Zagame noted his pleasure at the announcement last week by the Monsanto Corporation which is the sole U.S. producer of PCB, that the company intends to phase out the production of PCB, replacing it with more environmentally acceptable substitutes.

PCB, which is used in the manufacture of electrical and industrial capacitors and transformers, has been found to cause serious health hazards to human beings. It has also shown up in tests of Lake Ontario salmon restocking program in Oswego County.

Assemblyman Zagame feels that "given the phase-out of this chemical by Monsanto, we can now look forward to the development of a major fishing industry in Oswego County, which in turn should help spur our local economy."

It is estimated that as many as 16,000 fishermen per day will visit Oswego County during the salmon season. "These fishermen," according to Zagame, "will need food, shelter, fishing equipment, gasoline, and other supplies, which means a boom to local business and increased employment opportunities for those enterprising Oswegoanians who will serve these sportsmen."

Assemblyman Zagame said that legislation he has been preparing for some time, which "would have essentially accomplished in New York what Monsanto has volunteered to do nationwide," may now be held "unless it is determined that specific legislation is needed to insure that the phase-out is completed within a reasonable time." He noted that legislation to ban the foreign important of PCB into New York may ultimately be needed to "insure that Monsanto's production of PCB is not replaced with foreign sources."

"In the meantime," he concluded, "I commend the Monsanto Corporation for its decision to act now to begin to end the PCB problem for future generations."

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NEWS
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Fisherman lose heavy to pollution

WASHINGTON (AP) — An estimate that Great Lakes commercial fishermen lost $360,000 a year because of chemical pollution is "rock bottom" Rep. Les Aspin, D-Wis., said today.

He said the losses were caused by a group of industrial chemicals called polychlorinated biphenyl (PBC).

Excessive PCB content has interfered with marketing of chub, carp and lake trout, Aspin said.

He has introduced legislation that would ban the import and interstate shipment of PCBs.

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