CMA NEWS RELEASE
Chemical Manufacturers Association (formerly Manufacturing Chemists Association)
2501 M Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20037 • (202) 887-1224

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jeffrey C. Van
(202) 887-1222

WASHINGTON (April 15) -- The Chemical Manufacturers Association and two public-interest organizations have submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency a proposed "consensus final rule" covering the "inadvertent generation" of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

The proposed consensus final rule, which was presented to EPA officials at a meeting held at the agency's headquarters here, was developed by CMA, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Environmental Defense Fund. It is the result of several months of discussions between the three organizations aimed at reaching an agreement on how PCBs that are inadvertently generated as an unwanted byproduct of various manufacturing processes are to be regulated.

CMA President Robert A. Roland called the proposed consensus rule "significant for two reasons. First, it establishes the framework for effective and reasonable controls over the inadvertent generation of PCBs.

"Second, and equally important, it represents what our industry hopes will be the beginning of a period of greater cooperation between industry and organizations like NRDC and EDF."

CMA, EDF and NRDC "have demonstrated, quite convincingly, that negotiation and agreement are not only possible between our organizations, but are more beneficial and productive alternatives to litigation," Roland said.

(more)

PCBs are no longer commercially manufactured in this country but remain in equipment such as electrical transformers installed before the government banned PCBs in 1979. PCBs are also unintentionally generated in many manufacturing processes.

PCBs are organic chemicals which contain various configurations of chlorine, carbon and hydrogen. Some PCBs are persistent and resist breaking down in the environment into more simple compounds. Since the ban four years ago, the amount of PCBs in the environment has steadily declined because of curtailed use, proper disposal and environmental degradation.

The proposed consensus rule is a result of negotiations between the three organizations that followed a 1980 federal appeals court decision that struck down parts of the agency's original regulations implementing the Toxic Substances Control Act. If adopted by EPA, the consensus rule would be the latest in a series of regulations covering PCBs following the court's decision.

The proposed consensus rule would:

*Specify how inadvertently generated PCBs are to be measured.

*Establish concentration limits on release of PCBs to products, air and water -- 25 ppm average per year and 50 ppm at any given time in products; 10 ppm at any given time for releases to air; and 0.1 ppm in water discharged from manufacturing sites.

*Maintain process waste disposal requirements.

*Create reporting mechanisms by which EPA will be informed of any significant quantities of PCBs released into the environment or in products.

# # #