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River contamination controls demanded

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Industrial wastes that may cause cancer and are found in the Ohio River must be brought under stricter control, Rep. Norman A. Murdock (R-Cincinnati) demanded Wednesday.

Angry at an apparent lack of concern about polychlorinated biphenals (PCB) in Cincinnati's source of drinking water, Murdock has fired off curt letters to Director Ned Williams of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Dr. Arnold Leff, Cincinnati health commissioner.

"I CONSIDER this matter to be of the highest priority and hope and expect that you will give it first consideration in your important duties," Murdock told Leff.

Murdock, assistant minority leader in the Ohio House, said he was jolted by a recent magazine article detailing the harm PCB is doing to birds and fish, particularly in the Great Lakes.

STUDIES SHOW PBC severely impairs the capacity of fish to reproduce, and presents a hazard to people eating the fish.

Murdock has called on Ohio EPA Chief Williams to begin at once an effort to develop standards for control of PCB.

WHERE DOES PCB come from? How does it get into our environment?

Industries, particularly those making electrical equipment, value PCB for its heat-resistant quality.

Murdock said, "It is my understanding the chemical is used in the manufacture of batteries, capacitors, paints and glass.

"BECAUSE OF THE high resistance of PCB to heat and normal decomposition processes, the chemical is not destroyed by normal procedures.

"PCB frequently enters water from industrial effluent sources, as well as underground water reserves through leaching in landfills."

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