EPA BEGINS SECOND TRY AT SETTING WATER DISCHARGE STANDARDS FOR NINE TOXIC POLLUTANTS

The Environmental Protection Agency expects in early February to trigger a new attempt at setting limitations for nine toxic pollutants discharged into the nation's waterways. The agency has prepared drafts of an advance notice of proposed rulemaking for standards that will limit the discharge of Aldrin/Dieldrin, benzidine, cadmium, cyanide, DDT, endrin, mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls and toxaphene. It is expected to be published early next month. All of the substances had been earlier announced as being candidates for control, and under provisions of the water pollution control law were expected to have been controlled by now. However, as disclosed in TOXIC MATERIALS NEWS last fall (TMN, Oct. 1, p. 105), the agency has found it necessary to postpone the standards and go back for more information. As part of this effort, EPA plans to hold a symposium and workshop March 11-14 to get more input.

EPA had issued proposed standards in December 1973, which were issued under what EPA calls "certain judicially prescribed time limitations." The agency, in a Dec. 19, 1974 draft of the proposed rules coming out next month, goes on to say that "because of these limitations, the agency acknowledged that the underlying data base might not be adequate scientific justification for parts of the proposed standard." After more maneuvering, EPA decided the best thing it could do was to start over. Thus it is issuing the new advance notice of proposed rulemaking which, it says, "presents the approach and affluent limitations under consideration by the agency to prohibit the discharge of toxic pollutants in toxic amounts and identifies information that is necessary to propose affluent standards" for the pollutants.

Listed in the draft of the proposal that was obtained by TOXIC MATERIALS NEWS is a list of categories of sources for the pollutants that will be controlled under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. EPA spokesmen point out the draft is subject to change before being issued. The sources listed are:

—Aldrin/Dieldrin: "pesticides manufacturing and/or formulating facilities constituting a point source discharging into navigable waters."

—Benzidine: "any benzidine manufacturing plants, dye manufacturing and formulating facilities, textile mills, hospitals or laboratories constituting a point source discharging into navigable waters. The category of source, cyclic organic chemicals, has been excluded because the category includes many industries which do not have any benzidine in their effluent. The category, benzidine manufacturing plant, is more specific and the one intended to be regulated."

—Cadmium: "any ferrous metal production, non-ferrous metal smelting and refining, petroleum refining, oil and gas extraction, industrial or inorganic chemicals, industrial organic chemicals, bituminous coal and lignite mining, alkalies and chlorine, storage or primary battery manufacturing, electroplating, metal mining, or agricultural fertilizer manufacturing facility constituting a point source discharging into navigable waters."

—Cyanide: "any petroleum refining, ferrous metal production, industrial organic chemicals, industrial inorganic chemicals, electroplating, non-ferrous metal smelting and refining, or metal mining facility constituting a point source discharging into navigable waters."

—DDT: "any DDT manufacturing or formulating facility that is a point source discharging into navigable waters."

—Mercury: "any paper and allied product, oil and gas extraction, industrial organic chemical, industrial inorganic chemical, non-ferrous metal smelting and refining, lumber and wood products except furniture, bituminous coal and lignite mining, storage or primary battery manufacturing, or metal mining facility constituting a point source discharging into navigable waters."

—PCB's: "any polychlorinated biphenyl manufacturing, capacitor manufacturing, transformer manufacturing or repairing facility, steel investment foundries,

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aluminum investment foundries, brass, bronze and copper investment foundries, waxes for investment casting process and railroad repair facilities constituting a point source discharging into navigable waters."

--Toxaphene: "any toxaphene manufacturing or formulating facility constituting a point source discharging into navigable waters."

The amount of limitation proposed for each of the pollutants is also included in the draft proposal. For all substances, there will be no discharge permitted in special waters. In addition, if the flow of a stream stops, the controlled substances may not be discharged until five days after measurable flow returns. Other limitations are:

--Aldrin/Dieldrin: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments, the Great Lakes -- .3 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .00026 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the immediate vicinity, single facility discharge limit shall be .07 kg/day. Estuary or coastal waters -- .7 ug/l; total daily weight limit is the same as for streams.

--Benzidine: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments or Great Lakes -- 2,500 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .0016 times receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the vicinity, single facility discharge limit shall be .43 kg/day. Estuary and coastal waters -- no standards set.

--Cadmium: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments or Great Lakes -- 70 ug/l in water with a hardness less than or equal to 100 mg/l as $CaCO_3$ or 2,000 ug/l in water with hardness greater than 100 mg/l as $CaCO_3$; for water with hardness less than or equal to 100 mg/l as $CaCO_3$ total daily weight shall not exceed .035 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the area, single facility discharge shall be 9.8 kg/day; for water with hardness greater than 100 mg/l as $CaCO_3$ total daily weight shall not exceed .26 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the area, single facility limitation is 73.4 kg/day.

Estuary or coastal waters -- 320 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .43 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in area, single facility discharge limitation is 122 kg/day.

--Cyanide: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments or Great Lakes -- 100 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .43 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the area, single facility discharge limitation is 120 kg/day. Estuary or coastal waters -- limits are the same as for streams.

--DDT: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments or Great Lakes -- .36 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .00026 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the area, single facility discharge limitation is .07 kg/day. Estuary or coastal waters -- .24 ug/l; total daily weight limitation is the same as for streams.

--Endrin: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments, Great Lakes -- .4 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .00086 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the area, single facility discharge limitation is .24 kg/day. Estuary or coastal waters -- same as for streams.

--Mercury: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments, Great Lakes -- 50 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .0043 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the area, single facility discharge limitation is 1.22 kg/day. Estuary or coastal waters -- 50 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .0086 times receiving water design

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flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the area, single facility discharge limitation is 2.5 kg/day.

--PCBs: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments, Great Lakes -- 280 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .00086 times the receiving water body design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point, single facility discharge limitation is .24 kg/day. Estuary or coastal waters -- 100 ug/l; total daily weight limitation is the same as for streams.

--Toxaphene: streams, lakes, impoundments, embayments, Great Lakes -- 2 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .0035 times the receiving water design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the immediate vicinity single facility discharge limit is .98 kg/day. Estuary or coastal water -- 2 ug/l; total daily weight shall not exceed .0017 times receiving water body design flow in m^3/sec to give kg/day, if there is more than one discharge point in the area single facility discharge limit is .49 kg/day.

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ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION SCHEDULES PUBLIC HEARING ON HANFORD WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Atomic Energy Commission will hold public hearings in Washington and Oregon Jan. 21 and Jan. 23 on the agency's waste management operations at the Hanford, Wash. nuclear facilities. The hearing in Richland will begin at 9 a.m. Jan. 21, with a hearing in Portland, Ore. set for Jan. 23 also beginning at 9 a.m. AEC says the hearing is being held "to afford further opportunity for public comment, in addition to written comments already submitted, to assist the AEC in determining the future of waste management programs at Hanford." Running the sessions will be Robert W. Hamilton, a professor at the University of Texas School of Law. Also taking part is Thomas F. Parkinson, chairman of nuclear engineering at Missouri University, and James A. Kittrick of the Department of Agronomy and Soils at the Washington State University.

AEC had scheduled a public hearing at Richland for Dec. 10, 1974, but this was postponed to give added time for public review of a draft environmental impact statement, issued Sept. 30, and for the naming of a hearing panel. The hearing at Portland was added, says AEC, because of "numerous requests for a second public hearing in a West Coast metropolitan city." The agency says it has extended until Jan. 23 time for public comments on the draft environmental impact statement.

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NATIONAL SCIENCE ACADEMY SEES LITTLE HEALTH IMPACT FROM OIL SPILLS

Information is limited, but based on what is available, "the effect of oil contamination on human health appears not be cause for alarm," concludes National Academy of Sciences report "Petroleum in the Marine Environment" issued this month. Petroleum contains small amounts of carcinogens and possibly small amounts of other harmful materials, the report says, but "the amounts of carcinogens known to be in petroleum that could be ingested by eating marine organisms is estimated to be no greater than that acquired from eating any other foods."

The report is based on papers presented by 60 scientists and engineers during a workshop held in 1973 and was the center of controversy last year when Dr. James Sullivan of the Center for Science in the Public Interest charged that a draft report ignored data describing the adverse effects of oil pollutants on human health. While those charges have led to the inclusion of more data to back up the draft report's original conclusions, those conclusions remain an oversimplification of the situation, Sullivan says.

According to the report -- prepared by E. Bright Wilson and James N. Butler of Harvard University; John M. Hunt, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution; Clayton D. McAuliffe, Chevron Oil Field Research Co.; Ruth Patrick, Academy of Natural Sciences; and Erman A. Pearson, University of California at Berkeley -- prudence requires operation under the assumption that there is no safe concentration below which carcinogens are safe to consume, but it is senseless to halt the consumption of seafood for fear of carcinogenic content while consuming other foods that pose an equal or even greater danger.

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