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Chemical Spill Probed

SEATTLE (AP) — A congressional subcommittee will probe the involvement of federal agencies in a toxic chemical spill last year in the Duwamish Waterway.

An aide to Sen. Warren Magnuson, D-Wash., told yesterday the legislators want to find out whether the spill was reported properly, why the agencies traditionally responsible for spill cleanup didn't respond and whether the Environmental Protection Agency's ensuing cleanup was effective.

An electrical transformer being shipped to an Alaskan Air Force station fell on a barge while being loaded on a Navy barge on Sept. 12, 1974.

The transformer ruptured and 200 gallons of a toxic chemical known as PCB, Polychlorinated Biphenyl, leaked from the transformer into the Duwamish. The chemical is suspected as a source of cancer in both fish and mammals, such as harbor seals, that inhabit industrial waters.