

INFORMATION SHEET FOR DEPARTMENT HEARINGS
TO CONSIDER PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE CODE
PROVISIONS FOR CONTROLLING POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS

PCBs are manufactured by companies in several countries and by only one United States producer, the Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Company. Monsanto has produced PCBs since 1929. PCBs have been used for a variety of applications which include transformer and capacitor fluids, hydraulic fluids, lubricants, sealers, paints, coatings, adhesives, plasticizers, carbonless reproducing papers, and other uses.

Department of Natural Resources surveys have shown that many fish from Lake Michigan, Lake Pepin, and the Fox River near Portage have accumulated PCBs above the 5 ppm action level established by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In the spring of 1975, the Food and Drug Administration prevented the sale of carp taken in Lake Pepin and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture acted to prevent the sale of carp taken in Green Bay because tests had shown the fish exceeded the 5 ppm level for PCBs.

The Department of Natural Resources has thus far identified the following sources of PCB discharge to the waters of the state: 1) effluents from municipal wastewater treatment plants, 2) effluents from pulp and paper mills which recycle wastepapers, 3) effluents from foundries using hydraulic fluids containing PCBs, 4) fallout from the air, and 5) accumulations of PCBs in river and lake muds.

Suspected sources of PCB discharge include leaching from sites where equipment or materials are stored or disposed which contain PCBs such as lighting fixtures, appliances, capacitors, transformers and other materials and losses to the air from incineration.

The Department of Natural Resources has considered the regulatory options for controlling losses of PCBs to the environment. The Department may adopt administrative rules for regulating the discharge of PCBs. The public hearings scheduled for August 28-29, 1975 in Room 490 of the General Executive Facility #1 - State Office Building, 201 East Washington Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin will consider two alternate proposals. The first would prohibit the discharge of PCBs to the waters of the state, while the second proposal would establish an effluent standard of .005 mg/l (5 parts per billion) for PCBs.

As part of the hearings, the Department is also interested in obtaining facts on all aspects of the PCB problem. Information gathered at this hearing with respect to sale, use and distribution of PCBs may be used by the Department as a basis for proposing or recommending state or federal legislation regulating the sale, use and distribution of PCBs or materials containing PCBs.