

1980

AN=296

LEACHING OF TOXIC AND CARCINOGENIC CHEMICALS
INTO DRINKING WATER REQUIRES PREPARATION
OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Thomas R. Adams
Ann Broadwell
Adams, Broadwell & Russell
400 South El Camino Real, Suite 370
San Mateo, CA 94402
(415) 342-1660

Attorneys for Local 467
Plumbers and Steamfitters Union

→ Woody Ben
PVC/VCm

Pitcher Keys
RECEIVED

MAR 04 1994

W. W. BAN

Bolt

20820001

BFG07176

Introduction

At one time plastic pipe for domestic water use was commonly regarded as the plumbing equivalent of a "better mouse trap". It was both cheaper to buy and easier to install. However, during the seventies, evidence developed which created serious problems for the plastic pipe industry. In 1973 and 1974 vinyl chloride was found to be a potent cancer causing substance. Large amounts of free, unbonded vinyl chloride that had not completed the chemical reactions to form vinyl chloride plastic were found in plastic pipe. By 1975 and 1976 the plastic pipe industry developed a process to remove the unreacted vinyl chloride from the plastic pipe.

Unfortunately, vinyl chloride was not the only problem. In order to be useable the pipe needs additional chemicals to give it flexibility. These chemicals are called plasticizers. Until comparatively recently the plastic pipe industry used the deadly PCBs as plasticizers. Now the industry is making widespread use of phthlate esters, particularly DEHP. The fact that DEHP causes cancer was established in a study released only a month ago, on October 15, 1980, by the National Cancer Institute.

Although the plastic industry insists the pipe is safe today, the industry adamantly refuses to disclose the ingredients of plastic pipe, claiming that the ingredients are a trade secret.

What is the public to do? Should we rely on assurances of the safety of plastic pipe from the same industry that told the public that vinyl chloride was safe and that PCBs were safe?

Under California law there is an answer to these questions.

BFG07177

20820002