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For

McGraw-Edison Company

and

Dow Chemical Company

Release Date: IMMEDIATE

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NEW CHEMICAL INSULATING FLUID DEVELOPED AS PCB REPLACEMENT IN ~~ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY~~ POWER CAPACITORS

NEW YORK, December 2, 1975 -- Development of a new, environmentally safe, insulating fluid that may replace "PCB's" in some electrical equipment applications was announced here today.

McGraw-Edison Company and Dow Chemical Company jointly reported that they have developed an insulating fluid as a replacement for PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyls) in high voltage power capacitors, which are said to improve both the quality and quantity of electrical service under certain conditions. McGraw-Edison is a major manufacturer of capacitors and other electrical equipment used by utilities and industry.

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Dow began development of the fluid several years ago and was joined by McGraw-Edison in refinement of the fluid for the electrical power distribution industry.

The joint announcement said that Dow plans to make the new insulating fluid commercially available early in 1976. McGraw-Edison plans to begin using it in capacitors by mid-1976.

PCB's -- introduced more than 40 years ago and industrially used because of their insulating properties -- have recently received restricted application because of environmental considerations.

Reports of their potential harm to the environment and to fish and mammals have resulted in a three-year-old voluntary restriction of PCB distribution to all industries, other than those applying the chemicals in closed systems, such as those found in power capacitors. Some scientists have proposed that the chemicals may have a much longer lifespan than previously suspected and are calling for a total ban on their use.

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When the chemicals are inadvertently discharged into the environment, evidence of PCB contamination in aquatic animals has been discovered miles from where the chemicals have entered the environment and/or waterways. And some environmentalists now are voicing concern over possible long-term lingering effects of the chemicals because of PCB's ability to withstand a natural breakdown of components.

According to Dow and McGraw-Edison, the new fluid -- which has an alkylated chlorodiphenyl oxide (DPO) base -- features the following health and environmental advantages:

* 20 to 36 times less toxic to fish than PCB's
* Less acutely toxic to mammals than PCB's
* More biodegradable than PCB's
* Easier to dispose of than PCB's

Herbert M. Appleton, president of McGraw-Edison's Electrical Systems & Services Group, said,"After examining results of extensive testing at Dow laboratories and after evaluating our own experiences with the new fluid in our equipment in hundreds of test samples over a three-year period, we have determined that our fluid offers the same as or better electrical performance than PCB's, at a far lower level of toxicity to the environment and at an economically satisfactory price.

"We have recognized the problem and have both taken and supported steps to see that PCB's are handled in the safest possible manner," he said. "We built a new plant at Greenwood, S.C., for high voltage capacitor production and have worked in the industry to call attention to proper handling and disposal methods.

"At the same time we have been engaged since 1971 in an extensive research program to develop alternatives to PCB's. Now, we have that alternative for use in power capacitors -- ecologically sound and economically feasible liquid dielectric that meets all the goals of our development program.

"In view of the significance of this development from an environmental point of view, McGraw-Edison is committed to making the nontoxic, highly biodegradable liquid dielectric available as an alternate to PCB's in new high-voltage capacitors produced by our company and other manufacturers."

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Mr. Appleton added, "Since about a third of all PCB's manufactured today are used in high-voltage power capacitors, which are essentially closed systems, acceptance of the new fluid for this application alone would result in a significant cutback of PCB production.

"Considering that there is a very real possibility that PCB's may be banned altogether, we feel the introduction and application of a viable substitute at this time constitutes a most fortunate solution to an extremely complex problem. We are proud that our research efforts will permit continued use of a valuable tool by utilities being called upon to meet this nation's ever-increasing electric energy demands, and, at the same time, we will have assisted them in their efforts to decrease environmental pollution," Mr. Appleton said.

"Accordingly, we are making the new liquid insulating fluid available as an alternate to PCB's in new high-voltage capacitors produced by our company and other manufacturers."

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