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San Leandro foundry faces safety

By Jayne Garrison
Staff writer

HAYWARD — New complaints of possible safety violations at a San Leandro foundry surfaced Monday in Alameda County Superior Court.

Judge Raymond Marsh signed a warrant allowing the state Department of Occupational Safety and Health to inspect Precision Found-

ers Inc. for alleged safety hazards including exposure to toxic substances and unguarded machinery.

Earlier this month, two men filed lawsuits against Precision Founders, contending they were exposed to polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) without their knowledge at the 414 Hester St. foundry last year.

Last August, the occupational safety agency cited the company

for 21 health violations, all of which are being appealed by the firm.

State inspector John Lemire said the latest complaint came Oct. 8 from a Precision employee who alleged nearly 10 safety violations at the plant, according to court affidavits.

Precision Personnel Director Thomas Gutierrez said he was unaware of the complaint and de-

check after complaint filed

clined to make further comment.

The unidentified worker contended the company did not have proper lockouts on electrical equipment, a hazard that could lead to accidental electrocution, according to Lemire's affidavit.

The employee also told the occupational safety agency that proper skin protection is not given to foundry workers exposed to toxic

substances, the affidavit said.

Precision executives, as a matter of policy, refuse to allow occupational safety agency inspections without a warrant, said state attorney Kay Kohler, who got the warrant in court Monday.

An inspection is expected to follow within the next few weeks, she said.

Ms. Kohler noted that Monday's

complaint is unrelated to the PCB lawsuits filed by former Precision worker Michael Boles, 33, of San Lorenzo, and current employee Alton Baxley, 27, of Hayward.

In separate lawsuits, the men claim they were exposed to PCB leaking from an electrical capacitor at the plant in October 1980.

Boles also contends he was fired April 20 because he complained.