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### ***Outboard Marine Corp. Leaves Seeping PCBs Up to U.S., Agency Says***

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

CHICAGO—The Environmental Protection Agency said Outboard Marine Corp. has decided to leave it to the federal government to stop toxic chemicals from seeping into Lake Michigan.

A federal regional response team, made up of the EPA and other government agencies, recently said that immediate action was needed to prevent contaminants from flowing into Lake Michigan from a ditch on Outboard Marine's property. The company was offered an opportunity to seal the ditch, the EPA said, but refused.

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As a result, the EPA said the response team will begin the work in 30 to 45 days and will finish it before spring rains or snow washes the contaminant, polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, into the lake.

Although the EPA called the Outboard Marine's action's "irresponsible," Hugh B. Thomas, general counsel for the company, said the EPA has the authority, expertise and "very likely the responsibility" to seal the ditch. He said the environmental problems the EPA identified originated before the laws it is citing were passed.

The EPA filed suit in March 1978 to force Outboard Marine, which makes outboard motors, to clean up what the government charged was massive contamination of Waukegan Harbor with PCBs. The sealing of the ditch isn't a result of the suit, which is still pending in federal court.