Water Pollution

CORPS AND COAST GUARD REACH ACCORD ON OCEAN DUMPING OF DREDGED MATERIAL

The U.S. Coast Guard and the Army Corps of Engineers will share surveillance and enforcement duties over ocean dumping of dredged materials under an interagency agreement announced September 7.

Under the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act, the Coast Guard will conduct surveillance and other enforcement activities to prevent unlawful transportation of materials for dumping and to prevent unlawful dumping by firms under contract to the corps. The corps, under that Act, will ensure that the disposals conform with project plans and procedures.

The agreement was signed by Rear Admiral Robert H. Scarborough, chief of staff of Coast Guard headquarters, and Major General Ernest Graves, director of the corps civil works program.

Chemicals

DETECTABLE AMOUNTS OF PCBs FOUND IN MOTHERS' MILK SAMPLES, EPA REPORTS

Detectable levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were found in 65 out of 67 milk samples taken from nursing mothers in 10 states, according to figures released by the Environmental Protection Agency September 10.

EPA said the samples are the first analyzed of a total of 1,015 samples taken nationwide nine months ago. Analysis of all samples is expected to be completed early in 1977 by scientists at Colorado State University under contract to EPA.

Levels of PCBs ranged from .2 parts per million (ppm) on a fat basis to 10.6 ppm. The average level was 1.7 ppm. The samples analyzed to date are from Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

The temporary maximum allowable PCB level set by the Food and Drug Administration is .2 ppm for infant and junior food and 2.5 ppm for cows' milk on grocers' shelves.

Monsanto Study Findings

Meanwhile, the director of the medical and environmental health department at Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Company, sole U.S. producer of PCBs, said preliminary information from PCB studies shows no cases of either malignant melanoma or pancreatic cancer among current or former employees engaged in PCB production.

George Roush said the information is based on a review of the records of more than 300 employees at the Monsanto plant in Sauget, Ill. He said the information was extracted from an ongoing epidemiological study that will require another 12 to 18 months to complete.

Roush said the preliminary information was released in response to questions about a Mobil Oil Corporation study which reported three cases of melanoma and two cases of pancreatic cancer among 72 workers exposed to PCBs at a Mobil plant in New Jersey.

Roush said other preliminary information shows that the incidence of lung cancer among deceased former employees who worked in Monsanto's PCB unit was "higher than the rate for the general U.S. population," but he added "the evidence developed from this preliminary study would suggest that the cases of lung cancer are not PCB dose-response related." Roush said Monsanto's long-term feeding studies with animals further indicate that PCBs are not carcinogenic.

The study will be transmitted to appropriate federal agencies and published upon completion, Roush said.

Japanese Report Link

In another development, a specialist at the National Cancer Center Research Institute in Tokyo told an international conference on cancer September 12 that two persons who died within five years after ingesting cooking oil contaminated with PCBs had liver cancer that was definitely related to the PCB and another three liver cancer deaths were possibly or probably related to PCBs.

Tjkeshi Hirayama said 1,000 persons in Yusho, Japan, ate rice oil accidently contaminated with from .5 to 6 grams of PCBs. The high percentage of cancer, reinforced by data on animal effects, suggest a "high possibility" that PCBs caused the liver cancers, he said.

Energy

ERDA TO CONDUCT PUBLIC HEARINGS ON PLAN FOR RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT, DEMONSTRATION

The Energy Research and Development Administration will hold meetings in San Francisco September 20-22 on the National Plan for Energy Research, Development and Demonstration: Creating Energy Choices for the Future (ERDA 76).

The purpose of the meeting is to acquaint the public with ERDA's long-term energy plan and to obtain public comment on federal energy research, development, and demonstration, including emerging technologies. Panels composed of ERDA assistant administrators for energy production, environment and safety, and conservation technologies will explain the purpose and content of the plan and receive public comments.

Notices of intent to address the meeting should be addressed to Martha Dixon, 1333 Broadway, Oakland, Calif. 94612 and should include the name and address of the participant, nature of interest in the national plan, length of time required, and, if possible, text of the presentation.

Copies of the national plan are available from ERDA, Technical Information Center, Box 62, Oak Ridge, Tenn. 37830. The plan is available for inspection at ERDA Headquarters, 20 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., and at ERDA Operations Offices.

Sewage Treatment

FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION PROPOSES AMENDMENTS TO DEVELOPMENT GRANT RULES

Amendments to regulations for development grants for community domestic water and waste disposal systems (7 CFR 1823) were proposed by the Farmers Home Administration September 3 (41 FR 37340).

The proposed amendments include additional users who may benefit from the grants, such as farmers, ranchers, rural residents, and rural users whose needs could be met by a single residential-size water meter. The amendments also explain bulk service and refunding of grant funds.

Use and determination of user cost and median income rather than family user cost and median family income are explained in the proposal, and reference to waste treatment and waste collection facilities as separate projects was deleted from the regulations.

MONS 032244