

Toxic Paint Chemical Is Found in 17 of 39 States

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19 (UPI) — A toxic chemical used in plastics and paints has been found in unexpectedly large amounts in 17 of 39 states sampled, according to Government scientists. The chemicals appeared especially prevalent in newly developed real estate lakes.

The chemical is polychlorinated biphenyls, chemically similar to the insecticide DDT. It is widely used in plastics, paints, caulking compounds and hydraulic fluids.

The PCB findings were contained in a paper presented to the American Chemical Society in New York in August by three United States Geological Survey scientists led by Hans

J. Crump-Wiesner. The Interior Department made the paper public today.

Reporting on a Federal monitoring program concerned with pesticides in water supplies, the three said that they had analyzed more than 2,000 water and sediment samples from January, 1971, through last June.

"We expected to find traces of PCB's at sampling points near industrial centers, but were surprised to find detectable levels in samples from 17 of 39 states covered by the sampling," they reported. "A safe level for PCB's has not been generally accepted."

"We found PCB's in river

water, some newly developed real estate lakes, and at two United States Geological Survey stations located in relatively remote areas unaffected by man," Mr. Crump-Wiesner said. "We also found lake and stream sediments to have relatively high concentrations of PCB residues. One out of every five bottom sediment samples collected in 18 states contained significant concentrations of PCB's."

The states where detectable samples were found were California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington.