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Pollutant Sent to WNY for Disposal

About 100 tons of materials contaminated with a deadly chemical have been shipped to Lewiston for disposal because the Province of Ontario can't handle the waste of its own electric utility.

The materials involved are contaminated with members of the chemical family usually termed "PCB" in a short from of t[he] hemical name. They are extr[e]mely long lasting and hard to destroy and are thought to cause birth defects, liver and kidney damage and possibly cancer.

Lake Ontario fishermen have been warned by the Ontario government not to eat fish from the lake because they are contaminated with the chemical. Fish in the Hudson River are also contaminated with the material.

Ontario Hydro, the provincial power company, has no place in the entire province to dispose of the material, so the wastes have been shipped to the only company in New York State licnesed to dispose of PCB, Chem-Trol Pollution Services Inc., of Balmer Rd., Lewiston.

William M. Friedman, acting regional director for the state Dept. of Environmental Conservation, told The Courier-Express he was not aware Ontario was shipping the material to New York for disposal.

Louis E. Wagner, president of Chem-Trol, said the waste material had been shipped to his firm's plant. He said the company was attempting to determine how much actual PCB was involved.

The principal use of PCB today is in electrical insulation. It doesn't burn, doesn't break down and is a much better insulator than the oil once used.

Wagner said that if the material is burned in his plant, it is burned in a closed chamber. Then the exhaust fumes are chemically treated to produce a safe, nontoxic salt. If burned in the open air, PCB produces hydrochloric acid fumes.

Ontario Hydro collects the material from all over the province at on sitee in Toronto. It is then sealed in metal drums or plastic containers and put on specially built trucks for shipment to Chem-Trol. A new accumulation of the material is building up in Toronto.

The official responsible for disposing of the material for Ontario Hydro said it was sent over the border "because there is no facility in Ontario that can destroy PCB."



William M. Friedman
... unaware of shipment