Oakland, CA
(Alameda Co.)
Tribune
(Cir. D. 165,413)
(Cir. S. 183,341)

DEC 9 1982

Allen's P. C. B Est. 1888

County to clean up Santa Rita PCB

1407

By Carol Brydoll
Tribune Staff Writer

Alameda County officials, who already have spent millions to deal with security and utility problems at the dilapidated Santa Rita Rehabilitation Center, must now deal with potentially costly PCB contamination at the county jail in Pleasanton.

County supervisors have signed a consent decree with the federal Environmental Protection Agency that promises to inventory and remove PCB-contaminated transformers and dirt tainted by leaking capacitators by early next year.

"It's going to cost us a few bucks," said board chairman Joseph Bort, adding that exact cost estimates are not yet available. "The ironic thing is that we inherited these transformers from the federal government and they're suing us."

Last month the county was slapped with an administrative complaint and an $18,000 fine for alleged violations of the Toxic Substances Control Act by EPA inspectors who visited the jail last year after a transformer exploded, spraying PCB-laced fluid on two jail workers.

(One worker has sued the county, contending his health was damaged by his exposure to the fluid.)

Federal inspectors concluded that the fluid contained only minute amounts of the cancer-causing substance (polychlorinated biphenyls), but found a number of other potential PCB hazards at the jail.

As part of the agreement, signed by Bort last week, the county promises to set up a record-keeping system detailing locations of all PCB-containing substances at Santa Rita, to bring PCB storage facilities up to federal safety standards and to inventory all transformers at the jail site and dispose of those found to be PCB-contaminated.

The county also agreed to test soil around the approximately 52 "dormant" transformers that are sitting directly on the ground and may be leaking the toxic substance.

The agency agreed to waive the $18,000 fine if the county promises to correct all PCB-related problems at the jail by Jan. 31, 1983.

PCB-ARCH-EXT0376132