BURLINGTON, N.C.
TIMES-NEWS

JUL 29 1981

Another suspect

PCBs linked to birth defects and deaths

PCBs, another chemical used for decades as a fire and heat retardant, is another suspected carcinogen.

When, in 1978, some PCBs were dumped along 240 miles of highway in North Carolina, including a stretch in Alamance County, the forces of the state went into a quandary over what to do.

Nothing, ultimately, was done. The dumpers were tried and found guilty in Raleigh.

But the relatively small amount of PCBs dumped did not compare at all with the huge amount of PCBs that line riverbed bottoms throughout the state and the Southeast.

A research chemist told The Times-News "it is almost certain" the PCBs coat the river bottoms, accruing from years of runoff, and from the transformer oil dumped on roads in summer to keep the dust down. The transformer oil contained PCBs to help insulate against extreme heat.

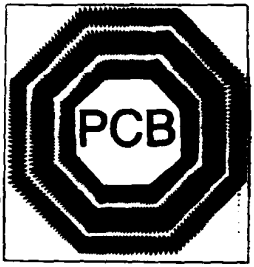
But no one in the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or concerned state agencies had any notion whether the widely-used substance existed on river bottoms.

LINKED TO BIRTH DEFECTS

PCB is a suspected carcinogen in humans and has been linked to birth defects, miscarriages and several deaths during its 50-year history.

Like mercury, PCB is a substance that can build up to toxic levels in the human body. The most common method of PCB ingestion is by eating fish. But Herbert Souther, a research chemist and water specialist, contended that humans "won't get enough" to harm them via this route.

According to Souther, it takes approximately 3 ounces of PCB to kill a 160-pound person.



Problems can also develop from the contact of PCBs with a person's skin. Internet have tested PCBs with a conditioner known as chloracne, a disease involving skin eruptions.

Chris West, director of the Public Awareness Office of Raleigh's EPA branch, said he was unsure whether North Carolina environmental officials monitored PCB levels in the rivers, but added, "I think there's an accurate statement though, that PCBs are there."

Despite the federal ban on the manufacture of PCB, the substance is still used in the manufacture of items such as capacitators, due to an exemption in the law permitting its use in "closed conditions."

PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, are a family of suspected cancer-causing chemicals that are known to cause skin diseases and have been linked to birth defects. Introduced by the Monsanto chemical company in 1929, PCBs quickly found widespread commercial use because of their nonflammability, high electrical conductivity, their resistance to heat and their chemical stability. They remain stable, and they don't burn even at high temperatures. PCBs came to be used in 60 to 65 percent of the capacitors — devices designed to store utility pulses through the utilities in regulate voltage — manufactured in the United States.

From 1929 to 1971 they were used in transformers mounted on roofs, inside buildings or buried in urban areas. PCBs can also be found in capacitor banks under electric trains and in mining equipment, natural-gas pipeline compressors, electromagnets, pulse pigeons, carbonless copy papers used in television sets, air conditioners, fluorescent ballasts and the fluorescent light fixtures that may be in your home.

Ironically, it was the toxic PCBs that were the preferred insulating fluid for use in electrical equipment placed in areas populated areas, while asbestos, a wood-oil insulating fluid, the oil often ruptured and disburse, was used primarily in remote areas. No one recognized the dangers of PCBs, considerable and workers were more afraid of handling with mineral oils, which they knew could catch fire or explode.

The first known reported research to PCBs was reported in 1937. The studies had just caused chloracne, followed by casualties succeeding to a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health study. He was hospitalized afterward with abdominal pain and dizziness. At autopsy, cirrhosis of the liver with "superimposed acute yellow atrophy was found," says the study. He had been exposed to low concentrations of PCBs while manufacturing them.

In 1968, an estimated 1,000 residents of Yusho, Japan, ate rice oil accidentally contaminated by PCBs. Within five years, five of them were dead. By Urmi report — six times the normal death rate. Others who had eaten the oil came down with severe cases of chloracne; there were also reports of stillbirths and miscarriages among the group. Japan immediately banned all trade in the chemical.

PCBs move through the environment. Those that behave like fats, which don't readily dissolve in water, stay local to organic fatty matter and collect on the surfaces of solids, sediments and sediments and waterborne particles. Thus the PCBs move through the ecosystem with the particles to which they are attached and get taken up by living organisms either through ingestion or absorption directly through the skin or surface. It is suspected that for as long as a living organism is exposed to PCBs, the chemical will continue to increase in concentration within that organism.

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THE DAILY TIMES-NEWS

Established in 1887

"Hanover County's only Daily Newspaper"

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This newspaper is dedicated to furnishing information to our readers so that they can better promote and preserve their own freedom and encourage others to see its blessing. For only when men understands freedom and is free to control himself and all he possesses can he develop to his utmost capabilities.

We believe that all men are equally endowed by their Creator, and not by a government, with the right to take usual action to preserve their life and property, and secure more freedom and keep it for themselves and others.

To discharge this responsibility, free men, to the best of their ability, must understand and appreciate daily living the great moral guide expressed in the Creating Commandment.

David Rutledge
PUBLISHER

Ed Beck
EDITOR

(USPS 146-600)

Not names...

...But the costs, and games need airing out



Public Fo

The press should never try to damage the good name of anybody. But it cannot do its job sometimes, without hurting, in some measure, someone.

Sometimes, it's obvious. In a murder, for example, a newspaper may report the initial crime, the arrest, and then the court proceeding. When guilt is established, few people have much compassion for the murderer. But the newspaper cannot name him or her without hurting perhaps a mother somewhere, or an oldsmobile man, who may be pained to see their [illegible] in such straits.

But that does not mean the truth of what has been reported should rather have been censored in some way.

A letter on this page today raises some pointed about a shoplifting case that received more than usual coverage. It received the coverage because it was dismissed quietly, without the knowledge of the complaining merchant, or the arresting officer.

We cannot see how a case can be dismissed when the litigants and key participants are not heard.

We are not attacking the defendant in the case at all. In fact, as have mentioned as possible was made to identify the person, because who it was was incidental to "what was" going on.

There was a suggestion of judicial favoritism. The law

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