



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

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J.M.H.

December 22, 1975

OFFICE OF THE
ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Mr. Hanley

For at least five years, the Federal Government and the manufacturing industry have been aware that polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) pose a threat to human health and the environment. Last month, at EPA's National Conference on Polychlorinated Biphenyls in Chicago, leading experts clearly documented the fact that PCBs are pervasive in the environment, are causing disruption and economic harm to commercial fishing in many areas and are creating a serious potential health hazard to the public. While certain voluntary measures have been initiated in the past, the widespread and persistent occurrence of PCBs underscores the failure of existing practices to adequately control the escape of PCBs into the environment.

Today I announced a broad EPA program of regulatory and non-regulatory actions to reduce the levels of PCBs in the environment. My statement, (which is enclosed), stated that we must, as a society, accept and work toward a goal of totally eliminating the production, importation and use of PCBs as rapidly as possible. Toward that end, I am asking you, as a principal member of the PCB industry, to commit yourself to a deliberate and expeditious search for alternatives.

I recognize that this effort will not be easy. A careful examination and balancing of the environmental consequences of alternatives will be required. The economic impacts of the changeover will have to be considered. I also recognize that such an effort cannot be accomplished overnight. Nevertheless, I have confidence that American industry has the capacity to solve this difficult task, and I solicit your full cooperation and participation in this effort.

So that we can begin this undertaking as soon as possible, I am inviting you and other representatives of your industry to meet with me on January 14 to discuss this undertaking and work towards the development of plans on how it can be accomplished as smoothly and rapidly as possible.

I have also asked representatives of the principal users of PCB-containing transformers and large capacitors to meet with me on January 22 to discuss ways that we can effectively manage and control PCBs in current use. I am enclosing a copy of my letter to these companies. At our meeting on January 14, we might also discuss some of the matters outlined in that letter.

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I am looking forward to meeting with you at EPA in Room 1112, 1921 Jefferson Davis Highway, Crystal Mall #2, Arlington, Virginia, on January 14, from two to five in the afternoon. If you have any questions concerning the arrangements for this meeting, you may contact Dr. I. E. Wallen, (202) 755-6956.

Sincerely yours,

Russell E. Train
Russell E. Train
Administrator

Mr. John W. Hanley
President
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Enclosures

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