



Get the Facts!

about

PCBs



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## Managing PCB-Containing Wastes in Your School District

**Prior to 1979, PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) were widely used in electrical equipment such as fluorescent light ballasts, transformers, and capacitors. Although PCBs are no longer used in manufacturing, there are still millions of pieces of equipment in operation that contain PCBs. When not handled and disposed of properly, PCBs can be harmful to children and adults. In addition, failure to follow the laws for managing PCB-containing wastes can result in federal penalties, which can cost your school district thousands of dollars.**

### *How Do I Know If It Contains PCBs?*

The type of PCB-containing waste you are most likely to find in your school district are fluorescent light ballasts. Almost all fluorescent light fixtures made before July 1979 have an electrical component, known as a ballast, that contains small amounts of highly concentrated PCBs. Sometimes the ballast has the date of manufacture on it, and sometimes it is marked "No PCBs" by the manufacturer. If the light fixture has no manufacture date and is not marked "No PCBs," assume that the ballast contains PCBs.

### *What Should I Do If A Ballast Is Leaking?*

When ballasts fail, PCBs can leak out. It is important to routinely check your light fixtures to see what condition the ballasts are in. Since PCBs can be easily absorbed through your skin, be sure to protect yourself while inspecting light fixtures by wearing rubber gloves and goggles to protect your eyes. If you find a leaking ballast, replace it immediately and dispose of it properly.

### *How Do I Dispose Of Ballasts Properly?*

Leaking ballasts that contain PCBs must be securely packaged in a container approved for PCB disposal. The container must be marked "Contains PCBs" and have an accompanying manifest to track its disposal. The package must be shipped by an authorized PCB transporter to a licensed PCB disposal facility. Check in the yellow pages under "Environmental Consultants" for a listing of licensed transporters and disposal facilities.

The Toxic Substances and Control Act (TSCA) and the federal PCB regulations (40 CFR Part 761) describe the legal requirements for use, storage, and disposal that apply to light ballasts and other PCB-containing wastes. The regulations can be found at the EPA website listed below.

### *More Questions?*

In addition to fluorescent light ballasts, there are other wastes you may handle that contain PCBs, such as electrical transformers and capacitors, and some waste oils. For more information about managing PCB-containing wastes, visit EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/r10earth/pcb.htm](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/pcb.htm)

If you have questions or concerns, you can call EPA's PCB staff:

**Daniel Duncan at 206-553-6693**

**Ray Nye at 206-553-4226**

**Bernie Pribish at 206-553-5293**

Or call toll-free at **1-800-424-4372**