



# Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)

## Addressing PCBs in Northern Virginia

Division of Planning and Environmental Services

July 2020



[novaregion.org](http://novaregion.org) / [@novaregion](https://twitter.com/novaregion)



# What are PCBs?



Polychlorinated Biphenyls



Man-made chlorinated chemicals



Legacy pollutants that do not break down easily in the environment



The U.S. banned the manufacture of PCBs in 1979 after 50 years of production due to their toxicity

# Why are PCBs an issue?



They do not readily decompose in the environment allowing them to accumulate in air, water, and soil.



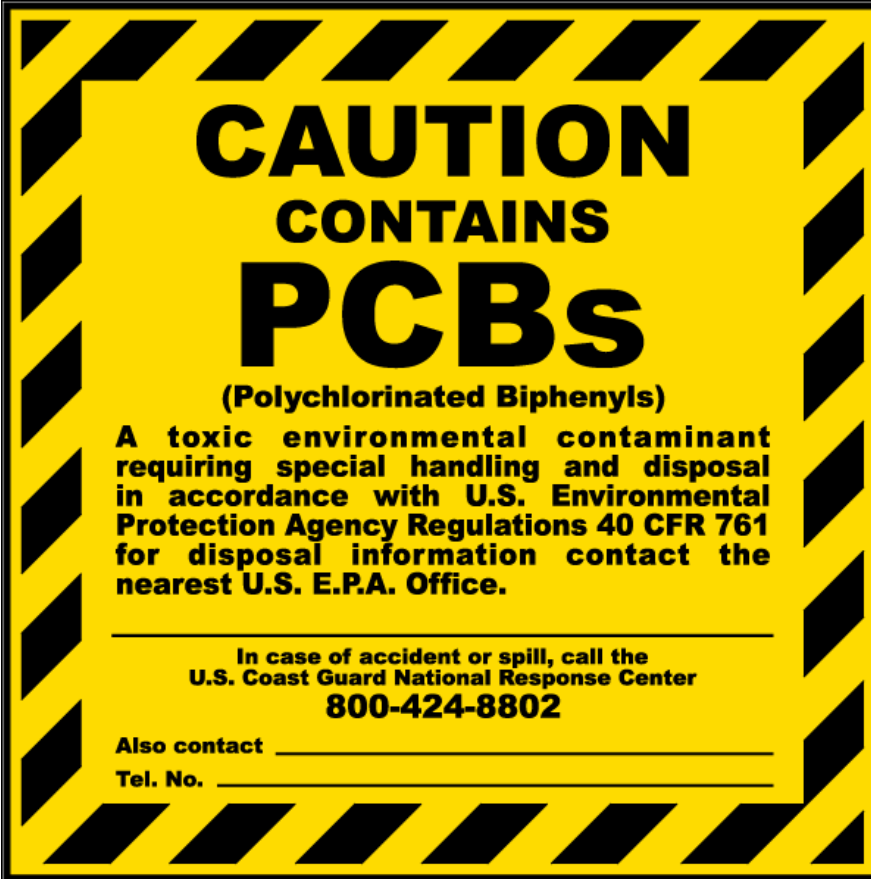
PCBs remain buried at the bottom of water bodies and bioaccumulate in plants, food crops, or fish.



People who ingest PCB exposed fish or food crops risk exposure to PCBs.



PCBs are dangerous because they are known to cause cancer and have adverse health effects on the immune, reproductive, neurological, and nervous systems.



## Products that may contain PCBs

- Lubricants and hydraulic fluid
- Transformers and capacitors
- Coolants in electrical equipment
- Paints, plastics, rubbers
- Pigments, dyes, inks
- Adhesives and tapes
- Fluorescent light ballasts
- Insulation materials
- Caulk, roofing, and asphalt
- Pesticides

# How do we prevent PCB contamination?

Be aware of common products and equipment that may contain PCBs and dispose of them properly

Replace old fluorescent light ballasts

Take precautions during building renovations to prevent PCB contamination from building materials

Take precautions during demolition of buildings built before 1980

Look out for and report spills and leaks from electrical and hydraulic equipment

Look out for and report illegal or improper dumping of PCB containing waste

# How do we report PCBs?

Contact information to report an incident



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regional PCB Hotline:  
**Call 215-814-3255**



Toxic Substances Control Act Hotline:  
**Call 202-554-1404** or e-mail [TSCA-Hotline@epa.gov](mailto:TSCA-Hotline@epa.gov)



Virginia Department of Environmental Quality: **Call 804-698-4000**

Register PCB containing transformers:

<https://www.epa.gov/pcbs/registering-transformers-containing-polychlorinated-biphenyls-pcbs>