

I submit the following:

Attended Murray Darling Basin Royal Commission.

Bourke Community Consultation 1st May

Invited to make a submission.

Concern: Bourke Shire Council's Sewerage facility Weir Road Bourke. Adjacent Darling River built mid 1980. Situated above extensive good quality ground water, water at approx. 22 feet. Connected to Darling River.

High river recharge ground water. No river flow ground water re-enters river, spring like.

Concern: Soil on which sewerage facility is built lacks clay content sufficient to prevent contamination of ground water.

No evidence of plastic or clay lining or sewerage ponds. Evidence of contamination trenched with sewerage contaminated water.

Request for monitoring bores ignored. Need for independent assessment critical. Barwon Darling water is critical to all.

If you contaminate you destroy.

Jack Bennett

NSW

Phone

Attention: Alice
Reference No:
From: Jack Bennett, NSW 2840

Briefly as myself

I am 87 years of age, having spent 60 years on the Darling River with time spent as a Farmer of Stock and Irrigation and as a Earthmoving Contractor.

Early advice from Engineer John Brown in the early 1960s that "Bourke is sitting on a self-mulching silty clay soil with a shallow ground water table". Referring to the broad Darling River flood plain.

An early introduction to the, just completed and operational, (1985) Bourke Shire Council's Sewerage Treatment facility.

I was at that time a Bourke Shire Councillor and Secretary of the Bourke Water User's Association.

The Sewerage Treatment facility at first was to have evaporation ponds. These were deleted in favour of the disposal of waste water entitlement being sold to Mr Frank Jirman, to supplement his licenced entitlement from the Darling River, to enhance his irrigation of fodder crops for stock (cattle) feed.

Mr Jirman appeared to complain early of his lack of access to said outflow to the Council. Receiving no satisfaction Mr Jirman arranged a meeting between himself and responsible Council Officer. Mr Jirman requested that I be present.

Observation: Mr Jirman complained to the Council Officer "His lack of access to the outflow". The Council Officer responded that there was a problem necessitating the pumping back to the intake ponds, hence little or none was available Mr Jirman. Mr Jirman responded "It's leaking". By "it's" he was referring to the newly constructed ponds.

The Council Officer reiterated there was a problem and apologised for lack of access to the outflow. I was concerned but as the Public Works, the Water Authority, Bourke Shire plus the contractor were the responsible bodies, they would be aware of any problems and responsible for any rectification.

To compound any concerns re the structural integrity of said sewerage treatment facility.

I was delivering waste material from the Namoi Valley County Council Depot in Bourke to the then Rubbish Tip. This tip is adjacent to the Sewerage Treatment ponds. I observed a freshly dug trench that had been excavated.

1. The trench had been dug using a back hoe.
2. Council employees had dug the trench. No one else had access to the area or reason.
3. There was considerable fluid in the trench that was definitely sewerage contaminated. The fluid was rising up in the trench.
4. The fluid had to be contaminated ground water. The fluid was less than 2 metres from surface. This fluid was under pressure above what is normal experience re ground (turkey nest) designed sewerage ponds.

Returning some two weeks later with disposable dry waste I observed the trench had been filled in and area unrecognisable to previous landscape.

PARTICLE SIZE DISTRIBUTION & SOIL CLASSIFICATION

GEOMECH. STANDARD A4-1-P5.6 SYSTEM: TEST & RE.
SUPERVISING ENGR. *R. TADANIER* DATE: JUL

PROJECT: BOURKE

LOCATION:

SOIL PARTICLE DENS.:

LIQUID LIMIT:

BORE No : 1

DEPTH:

SAMPLE No : 3794

DISPERSAL INDEX: 1.2

PLASTIC LIMIT:

TESTED BY: OF

CHECKED BY: OF

DATE: 29.3.84

SCS DISPERSION: 64.0%

PLASTICITY INDEX:

PROJECT ENGR :

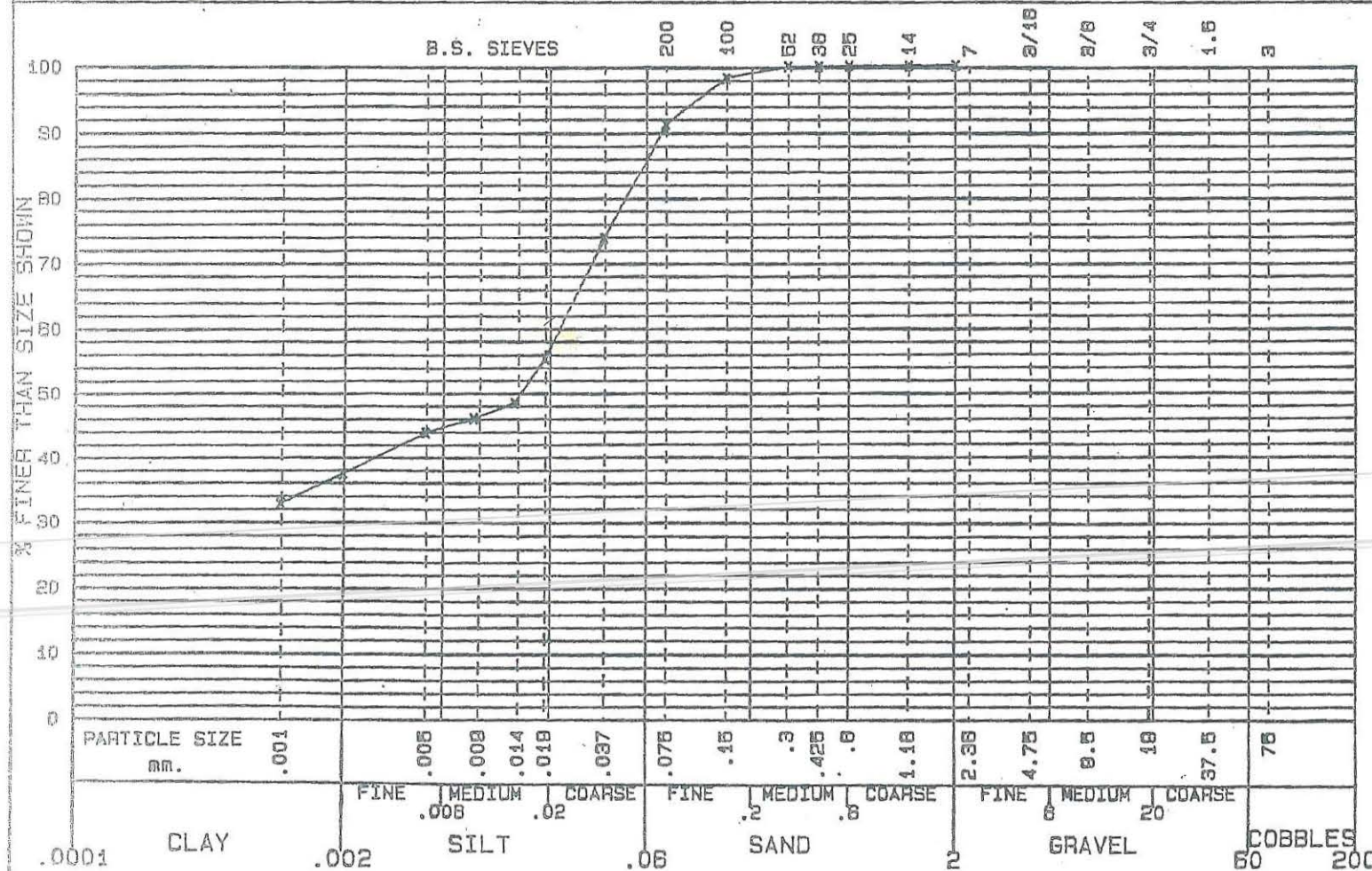
SAMPLE COLOUR: LIGHT BR. GREY

SHRINKAGE LIMIT:

CLASSIFICATION (COMBINED UNIFIED & CASAGRANDE SYSTEMS) : CI (VIS) REMARKS:

L.S. < 4.75mm : 13.0 %

L.S. < .425mm : %



CONSTITUENT PERCENTAGES

COBBLES : %

GRAVEL : %

SAND : 46 %

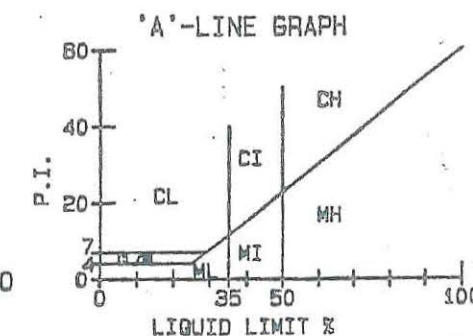
SILT : 47 %

CLAY : 37 %

EFFECTIVE SIZE D10: mm.

UNIFORMITY COEFF. (Cu):
D60/D10

CURVATURE COEFF. (Cc):
D30² / (D60 x D10)

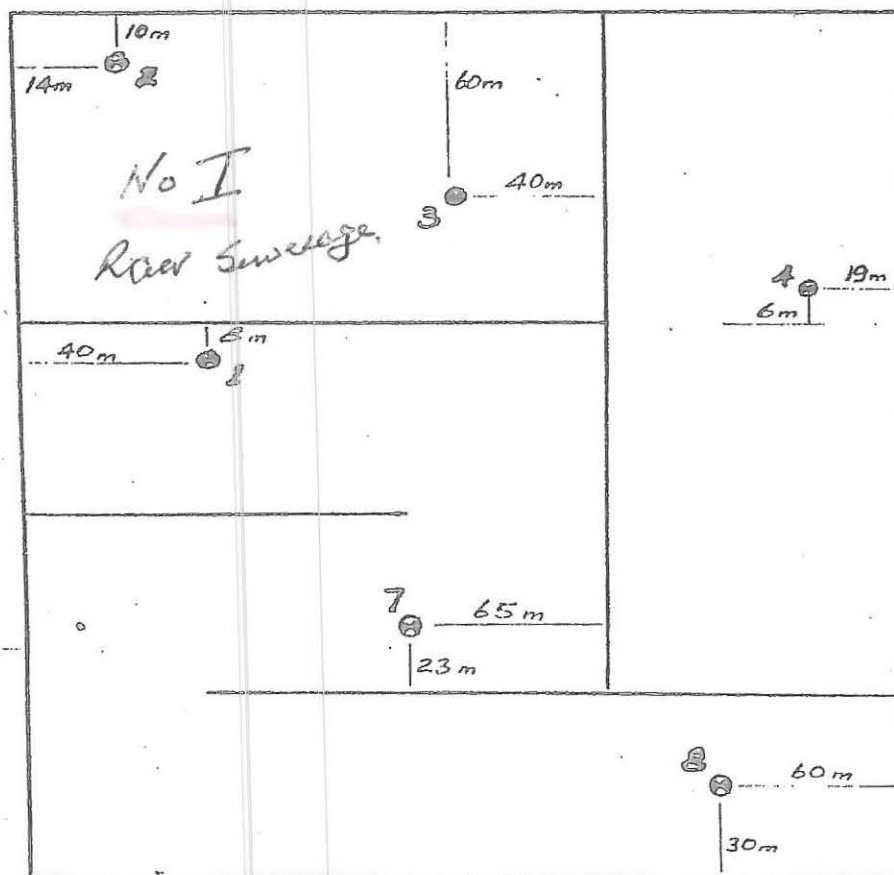


BOURKE SEWERAGE AUGMENTATION

TREATMENT WORKS

TEST PITS : EXCAVATED 19-3-84 Nos. 1 to 4

EXCAVATED 18-5-84 Nos. 5 to 8



Depths of Samples

1. 0.4m to 1.0m
2. 0 - 0.4m
3. 0 - 0.7m
4. 0 - 1.0m

Report No 84063

NSW

PHONE

29
Date: 4th November 2013

Not Presented
to Council
go to committee
Then
Council not

Attention: General Manager, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Bourke Shire Councilors and staff

Subject: the Bourke Shire Councils Sewerage Treatment Facility (adjacent to the Bourke to Weir Road)

To me it has been of concern as to that Sewerage treatments capacity to function to an acceptable standard since its original commissioning many years ago.

I believe staff of these:

The Public Works

Water Resources

Bourke Shire

E.P.A.

These offices were charged with the initial.

Selection of a suitable site, including suitable soil type. That would ensure no contamination from this complex to ground water and or Darling River, or any other adverse events.

To facilitate:

- Design
- Tender Process
- Monitor construction
- Sign off on completed project construction monitor completed sewerage treatment facility's capacity to function efficiently irrespective of any time factor.
- Ensure periodic inspections to ensure a continuing efficient functioning facility.

Such as Bores down to natural water table existing in Darling Flood plain. To monitor any possible contamination of said water table and / or leakage to Darling River.

As we the council have a new

- General Manager
- Water Manager
- And newly elected council

We have the responsibility to fully investigate this matter.

I look forward to Councils response.

Yours,

Jack Bennett

Councilor

Cr Bennett continues to insist sewerage plant faulty

Councillor Jack Bennett has vowed to keep fighting until he gets the answers he seeks.

The 86-year-old councillor and former tank sinker has grave concerns over the stability and management of Bourke's sewerage treatment plant and believes the facility is contaminating the groundwater.

Over the past six months he has been agitating for a proper assessment of the sewerage treatment plant and any possible contamination.

But according to Council's Water and Waste Water Manager Peter Brown and General Manager Ross Earl there is no reason at all to suspect that the facility is leaking.

Council conducts regular tests of the river and the NSW Environmental Protection Authority inspects the facility every six months and there has never been any indication of water being contaminated.

Cr Bennett has pushed to have monitoring bores dug around the sewerage facility, but his motion was soundly defeated in Council. However, the defeat has not stopped Cr Bennett, who is continuing to take up the matter with politicians, various government departments and the media, much to the annoyance of his fellow Councillors.

Bourke Mayor Andrew Lewis has even taken the extraordinary step of formally

instructing Mr Earl that neither he nor other Council staff are to take any action with requests made by Councillor Bennett in relation to the Bourke Sewerage Treatment Plant or the Bourke Levee Bank, which he also has doubts about.

Cr Bennett says he will not be persuaded to stop until he gets the answers he is after.

"The main thing I want is the testing of the groundwater and that's on the northwestern side," said Cr Bennett.

"The fact is that if you've got a fuel depot you've got to have monitoring down to the water and this one is supposed to have a monitoring bore, but somehow its never had one... It should have monitoring bores around it."

But Mr Earl told *The Western Herald* that monitoring bores are not required on the sewerage treatment facility.

"We have not had any direction from the EPA to install monitoring bores on it and if in fact we get the direction to do that we will be obliged to undertake that work," he said.

The EPA conducted a regular inspection of the facility around six weeks ago, but Council has not been made aware of any problems, said Mr Earl.

"We are waiting on the report now to find out any issues we should be concerned with and when that report comes to hand we will

look at it and act upon it accordingly, but I would assume that if any major things had been identified they would have been brought to our attention basically straight away," he said.

A clean report from the EPA is still unlikely to convince Cr Bennett, who insists that the only way to tell if there is a problem with the sewerage treatment plant is to dig down to the water table and test it. He is even willing to do it himself.

"Why don't they do the test? All you've got to do is dig a hole over there down into it - simple," he said. "I'll tell you what, I'd even get people to do it for nothing if they gave me permission to unlock the gate and we'd go down and do it ourselves. So why aren't they saying you go and do it? You ask the Council. We'll do it for nothing. We'll find it."

Since being elected, Cr Bennett has been a vocal opponent of the Bourke Skate Park, arguing prior to construction that it would quickly be abandoned and left unused by local youth. He has also spoken up on numerous occasions against the emergency bore on Walkden's Plain, which he feels is both unnecessary and unable to supply enough water if it ever was required.

Cr Bennett has even threatened resigning from his councillor position over what he says is 'unacceptable management'.

n't forget
ffodil Day
lay 21st August

esh Daffodils ☆

of Carole's in the main street
par Supermarket

OF DAFFODIL MERCHANDISE FOR SALE ♦



261/98 Resolved that Council confirm its contribution towards the Bourke Rural Counselling Services this contribution to be \$10,000 per year for the next three years.

262/98 Resolved to invite the Rural Counselling Service to the next meeting of Council to give an overview of the services they provide.

263/98 Resolved to Suspend Standing Orders

Di Tyson – Mateship Festival

Di Tyson from the Mateship Committee gave Council an update on the proposals for this year's Mateship Festival and seeking a further contribution from Council. The theme for this year is "Dreaming Along the Darling" and also incorporates a Back to Bourke reunion. Di suggested that Bourke Shire Council may wish to be involved by arranging a Back to Bourke reunion for previous staff and Councillors.

2:30pm Mayor returned to the meeting

264/98 Resolved to resume standing orders

2:45pm the Mayor took the chair

DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING SERVICES REPORT FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, 27TH APRIL 1998

REPORT 34/98

SEWER TREATMENT REUSE

Council in receipt of a letter from Mr. Phillip Mansell, Back 'O' Bourke Fruits P/L, asking of the possibility of gaining access to the wastewater from the sewer treatment plant.

The EPA have indicated to Council that the excess effluent discharging from this plant needs to be addressed for several reasons, mainly:

- Possibility of effluent reaching the Darling River.
- Potential health risk of effluent lying around treatment plant in large quantities.
- Direct discharge to Darling River during medium to high floods.

It is regarded important to enter into talks with possible users of this resource, and is therefore recommended that Council call Expressions of Interest to fully gauge its potential, and to give all interested parties an opportunity to submit their proposals.

PRESENT

Councillors

Cr Wal Mitchell
Cr Wayne O'Mally
Cr Pip Brown
Cr Wendy Nott
Cr Paul Loxley
Cr Mick McHugh
Cr Bill Hughes
Cr Lonnie Davis
Cr Daniel Buster
Cr Jack Bennett (9:30am)
Cr Barry Edwards (left the meeting 11.00am)

Staff

Alan Varley General Manager
Helen Pelham Director of Finance and Administration
Peter O'Shannessy Director of Engineering Services

APOLOGIES

243/98 Resolved that the apology received from Cr Peter Simmonds be accepted.

PRAYER

Cr Mitchell opened the meeting with a prayer.

REMEMBRANCE

Members stood in silence in the memory of the recently deceased:

Sylvia Faith Randall
Betty Margaret Robinson
Walter Joseph Davis

244/98 Resolved to suspend standing orders

UPPER DARLING WATER USERS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Bourke Shire
Chambers at 7.30 pm on 16-11-82

PRESENT

K.Smiles in chair, N.Simpson, B.Green, J.Davis,
J.Sator, P.Hams, G.Rice, W.Dyer, D.Thompson,
J.Buster, O.Boone, J.Bennett.

APOLOGIES

R.Pitches, D.Gordon.

MINUTES

Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
were read and confirmed, moved N.Simpson,
seconded J.Davis.

PRESIDENT'S

REPORT

President K. Smiles presented his report; adopted
on the motion of J. Sator, seconded N.Simpson, and
moved a vote of appreciation on the president's
report and his endeavours during the year.

TREASURER'S

REPORT

showed a bank balance of \$ 593-56. N.Simpson
moved, J Davis seconded, adoption of report

ELECTION

OF

OFFICERS

President= K.Smiles. Nominated N.Simpson,
seconded J.Davis.

Secretary- J.Bennett. Nominated N.Simpson,
Seconded J.Davis.

Treasurer-N.Simpson, Nominated J.Davis
seconded G.Rice

Senior Vice-President= G.Rice. nominated J.Sator
seconded B.Green.

Junior Vice-President=J.Davis Nominated J.Sator
seconded N.Simpson

Publicity Officer- K.Smiles Nominated J.Davis.
seconded J.Sator.

Committee: all present with President having
power to co-opt. moved J.Davis, Seconded G.Rice

GENERAL

BUSINESS

4. Moved J.Davis seconded J.Sator that the
subscription for the year be \$10-00.

2. Meetings :preferably every two months or at
discretion of the President; moved J.Davis, seconded
M.Ethridge.

3. Rostering pumping be investigated; letter to
Water Resources Comm. moved J.Sator, sec M.Ethridge.

4. Approach Water Resources Comm. re a greater
allocation of available up-river storage.

Meeting ended 9.15 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, 3 AUGUST, 1983

At Bourke Shire Chambers, at 9.30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

The Hon. M. C. FISHER, M.L.C. (in the Chair)

Legislative Council

Mr DOOHAN

Mr VAUGHAN

Sir Adrian SOLOMONS

Legislative Assembly

Mr BECKROGE

Mr STEWART

Mr DUNCAN

In attendance: Ms P. Hudson and Dr R. Woodward.

Apologies were received from Mr Akister, Mr McCarthy and Mr Schipp.

The public was admitted.

John Oswald Bennett, President, Bourke Ratepayers' Association, sworn and examined.

The Committee, upon application by Mr Bennett, agreed to release, for publication, the submission from the Bourke Ratepayers' Association.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Dr Mark Fort Harris, Medical Practitioner and Kevin Charles Knight, Alcoholics Counsellor—jointly called as witnesses—sworn and examined.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Elizabeth Harris, Social Worker, sworn and examined.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

Jack William Arthur Hardman, Inspector of Police, sworn and examined.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The public withdrew.

The Committee made an inspection of the Bourke High School, the Correspondence School Centre and the Technical College.

The Committee adjourned at 4.30 p.m. until Thursday, 4 August, 1983, at 11.00 a.m.

THURSDAY, 4 AUGUST, 1983

At Cobar Shire Chambers, at 11.00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

The Hon. M. C. FISHER, M.L.C. (in the Chair)

Legislative Council

Mr DOOHAN

Mr VAUGHAN

Sir Adrian SOLOMONS

Legislative Assembly

Mr BECKROGE

Mr STEWART

Mr DUNCAN

In attendance: Ms P. Hudson.

Apologies were received from Mr Akister, Mr McCarthy and Mr Schipp.

The public was admitted.

Robert Bruce Mitchell, Shire President, and Peter Barry Housden, Shire Clerk, both of the Cobar Shire Council—jointly called as witnesses—sworn and examined.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Shirley Isobel Kershaw and Jennifer Mary Nicholson, Representatives, and Michael John Nicholson, Deputy President, of the Nymagee Progress Association—jointly called as witnesses—sworn and examined.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

Ernest Robert Hayes, Chairman of the Lake Cargelligo Chamber of Commerce, sworn and examined.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 1.00 p.m. until Friday, 12 August, 1983, at 10.00 a.m.

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs): Health effects

PCBs were used from the 1930s to the 1970s in a range of industrial products. They were phased out due to impacts on the environment including bioaccumulation in fish and mammals.

The effects on human health depend on the concentration of PCBs and the type and extent of exposure.

What are PCBs and what were they used for?

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are organochlorine compounds which are mixtures of up to 209 individual chlorinated compounds referred to as congeners. These congener mixtures of chlorobiphenyl (the base chemical) are referred to by different identification systems.

In the Aroclor system a four digit numbering system is used where the latter two numbers represent the degree of chlorination, e.g. Aroclor 1260 means biphenyl with a 60% degree of chlorination.

PCBs were used from the 1930s to the 1970s in a range of industrial products including sealing and caulking compounds, inks and paint additives. They were also used to make coolants and lubricants for certain kinds of electrical equipment, including transformers and capacitors. They were phased out due to impacts on the environment including bioaccumulation in fish and mammals.

What happens to them in the environment?

PCBs may enter the air, water and soil from manufacturing, accidental spills and improper disposal. They do not break down readily and can persist in the environment for very long periods of time. They can be transported as particles in water and air and some

PCBs can be measured as vapour in the air. Only a small amount of PCBs can dissolve in water with most adhering to organic particles (such as compost) and sediments. They therefore bind strongly to soil.

PCBs can be taken up by organisms and (bio)accumulate in fish and mammals. The distribution of PCBs in the environment is therefore extensive and the general public may be exposed to PCBs from soil/dust, air, water, or as residues in foods.

How can exposure to PCBs occur?

Old appliances such as refrigerators and toaster ovens (more than 30 years old) may leak PCBs, and vapours accumulating in confined environments can be inhaled or make contact with the skin. Liquid PCBs may also be absorbed through skin contact from such appliances.

PCBs may be ingested if consuming contaminated food or may be inhaled from contaminated hazardous waste sites.

Exposure may also occur in workplace environments involved in repair and maintenance of PCB transformers, through accidents and spills, and disposal of PCBs and PCB-contaminated equipment.

Intake of PCBs from contaminated soil may occur via ingestion, inhalation or dermal (skin) exposure to





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Water Pollution

*Residence
for*