

## CHAPTER 25

## POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS (PCBs)

1. Discussion

a. Workplace PCBs are regulated as air contaminants by reference (oo). Environmental contamination involving PCBs is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under reference (pp). In general, PCBs do not present a major human health hazard. The only human health hazard that has been definitively associated with prolonged exposure to liquid PCBs is a type of skin lesion characterized as chloracne. Eye irritation, chloracne and subclinical liver enzyme abnormalities have been recorded with high inhalation exposures. It should be noted that no adverse human effects have ever been described for exposures to PCB surface contamination alone.

b. It is the Navy's policy to minimize the potential for PCB exposure by substitution with non-PCB containing materials, using engineering and administrative controls and using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

c. Reference (a) provides guidance for minimizing the exposure of Navy personnel to PCBs during the use, removal and disposal of PCBs and PCB-containing materials. Occupational exposures of PCBs may arise from processes such as retrofilling PCB-containing electrical transformers, removing PCB-impregnated felts or gaskets, or working with synthetic rubber, plasticizers, or other materials which contain PCBs. Reference (a) is available in the OSH office for all personnel to review. All supervisors will contact the OSH office for specific guidance prior to their personnel working with or around PCBs.