WHAT TO LOOK FOR...

- Yellow, oily liquid or tar-like potting material that leaks from the fluorescent light ballast or transformers
- Older, derelict transformers around the Installation

How YOU can help...

1. *Get familiar with PCBs!*
   Knowing what PCBs are and how to identify them is key to reducing potential exposure.
2. *See Something, Say Something!*
   Before PCBs were restricted, there were no regulations on how to safely discard the items and the long-term environmental effects were still unknown. Therefore, many transformers and electrical equipment were discarded in forests and unoccupied sites. If you see something that looks misplaced out in a field or the woods, report it to DPW.
3. *Take smart actions!*
   Exercise caution if you come across something that you think might be contaminated with PCBs. Report the PCB contamination to DPW/ED.

REPORT POTENTIAL PCB SOURCES IMMEDIATELY!

A leaking fluorescent light ballast or transformer may increase PCB levels in the air. Therefore, measures should be taken to avoid personal exposure and future exposure for others.

A typical pre-1979 PCB-containing fluorescent light ballast

HOW TO REPORT TO DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC WORKS

1. Call the Environmental Division at:
   703-806-0022

2. Report what was observed and the location of potential PCB contamination

To learn more about PCBs, visit:
https://www.epa.gov/pcbs/learn-about-polychlorinated-biphenyls-pcbs

PCB SAFETY AND AWARENESS

Typical PCB-containing Transformer

WHAT ARE PCBs?

Polychlorinated **B**iphenyls belong to a class of man-made chemicals known as chlorinated hydrocarbons. PCBs were prominently manufactured by the US between 1929 and 1979. Due to their chemical stability, non-flammability, and superior insulating properties PCBs were used in a large number of industrial and commercial products.

Products that used PCBs:

- Electrical equipment
- Paints
- Plastics
- Dyes and pigments
- Light bulbs
- Caulking
- Carbon paper
- Transformers and capacitors
- Adhesives and tapes
- Floor finish

The discharge of PCB's into the environment was outlawed by federal environmental regulations in 1976 but the effects of PCBs are still being felt today. PCBs are unique in that PCB molecules bind to fine sediments and can remain stable in the environment for long periods of time moving between air, water, and soil.

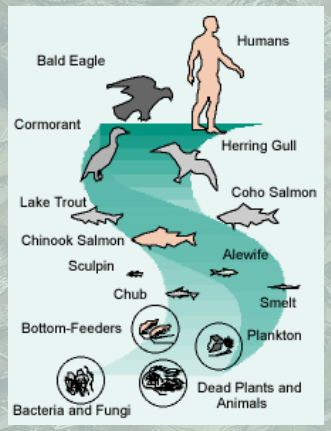
1865 First PCB-like chemical discovered

1929 EPA banned manufacturing of PCBs

1929-1979 2 million tons of PCBs were produced

WHY ARE PCBs SO HARMFUL?

During the time PCB's were manufactured, there were no regulated controls on disposal. PCBs do not break down easily and therefore are found widely distributed in our environment. PCB concentrations in the environment are quite low. However, because of bioaccumulation, this becomes harmful to humans and other predatory animals in high concentrations.



Bioaccumulation occurs when bottom feeders eat sediment containing PCBs. Larger animals then eat these bottom feeders multiplying the amount of PCBs they have in their body. PCB's can become a million times more concentrated in larger predatory animals such as fish and birds. So when we eat fish that come from contaminated streams, we are at risk of consuming large amounts of PCB's as well.

1977 EPA makes it illegal to discharge PCBs into navigable water

1978 EPA increased PCB regulation limit (500 ppm to 50 ppm)/ EPA began controlling PCB waste disposal

1979 EPA banned manufacturing of PCBs

HOW TO IDENTIFY PCBs?

PCBs have no known taste or smell, and range in consistency from an oil to a waxy solid. It can be difficult to distinguish PCB's from other materials so it is important to become familiar with the most common sources of PCB contamination. **PCB contamination is most commonly a result of:**

- Poorly maintained hazardous waste sites
- Leaks from old electrical transformers

The following criteria are provided to help identify transformers and Fluorescent Light Ballasts (FLBs) that may contain PCBs:

- FLBs and Transformers manufactured before July 1, 1979 may contain PCBs.
- Products manufactured between July 1, 1979 and July 1, 1998 that do not contain PCBs must be labeled "No PCBs".
- If an FLB or Transformer is not labeled "No PCBs," it is best to assume that it contains PCBs unless it is manufactured after 1979.
- Products manufactured after 1998 are not required to be labeled.

2002 Potomac River placed on DEQ Impaired list for PCB in fish tissue

2010 Accotink Creek placed on DEQ Impaired list for PCB in fish tissue

2015 PCB TMDL Action was implemented at Fort Belvoir