

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)

Summary/Purpose: The Polychlorinated Biphenyls Policy details the minimum requirements and procedures to Identify, Mark, Collect, Store and Dispose of materials containing, or potentially containing, Polychlorinated Biphenyls.

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB's) is an oily mixture that was primarily used in older model T12 magnetic **F**luorescent **L**ight **B**allasts (FLBs) which were manufactured years ago. The Environmental Protection Agency prohibited the manufacture, importation or reuse of the materials in 1979 after studies showed that these materials may be toxic to humans, fish and birds.

Under an energy management project, all of the fluorescent lamp ballasts on the Ole Miss campus were changed in the summer of 2000. Many of the ballasts were suspected of containing PCB's. The ballasts were collected and shipped to a recycling facility where they were dismantled, valuable components and metals were collected, and the PCB suspect components were sent off for Incineration. In all, Laboratory Services shipped in excess of 106,000 pounds of capacitors and lamp products for recycling and incineration.

Although every effort was made to remove and replace all FLBs (primarily for energy conservation), it is possible that some ballasts were overlooked during this massive renovation project.

The following steps should guide maintenance workers in identifying, removing and securing PCB suspected ballasts for disposal through Laboratory Services.

Maintenance personnel who remove ballasts from fixtures are required to examine the ballast for PCB's to determine if they could possibly contain PCB's. If contamination is suspected, workers must place the ballast into a container supplied by Laboratory Services, assure that the container is properly labelled, and notify Laboratory Services when a container is full.

Examine the ballast for PCB's.

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

When you must remove a PCB suspect ballasts from a fixture, you must wear appropriate protective equipment. Nitrile gloves, eye protection and chemical resistant coveralls may be necessary if contact with internal components is required. When working around sharp objects like sheet metal, wear appropriate outer work gloves in addition to inner Nitrile gloves. Eye protection is especially important when working on systems, which are in operation. Personnel must never attempt to open a ballast. Any leaking PCB suspect ballast should be placed in a

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plastic bag or some other appropriate container to prevent contamination caused by the leaking fluids.

1. Place the ballast into the 5-gallon open-head drum supplied by Laboratory Services. Keep the lid on the drum except when you are adding or removing material.
2. Laboratory Services will provide appropriate PCB Markings on the container. Maintenance personnel must mark the drum "Removed from service on (date)" and mark the day when disposal was requested.
3. Contact Laboratory Services (915) 5433 to have your container(s) removed after you have marked, filled, and labeled a drum with the date the materials were removed from service.