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## **EWG Analysis of PCB Contamination in Schools**

Thousands of American schools may be contaminated with unsafe concentrations of toxic polychlorinated biphenyls leaching from caulks, sealants and other aging building materials and fixtures.

PCBs, manufactured from the 1920s to the 1970s, were once used as insulators for electrical equipment, oils for hydraulic systems and motors, solvents, and components of fluorescent light fixtures.

These chemicals can cause a variety of health problems, including cancer, harm to the immune system, neurological damage, learning deficits, lowered birth weight and decreased thyroid hormone function.

Sen. Edward Markey, D-Mass., has calculated that up to 30 percent of American children in elementary, middle and high school may still be exposed to these dangerous industrial chemicals, despite a 1979 ban by the Environmental Protection Agency.

According to data provided to Markey's office by the EPA, which was also analyzed by EWG, over the past 10 years, the federal agency has received 286 reports of potential PCB contamination in school buildings in 20 states. These incidents ranged from the removal of a single fluorescent light fixture to large-scale remediation undertaken by some of the nation's largest school districts. In addition to schools, EPA reports also include colleges and universities where PCBs have been found.

This PDF document represents the EPA regional summary submitted in response to Sen. Markey's inquiry. The PDF contains information for those schools in a given EPA region where PCBs were detected. Please note that many states have not yet tested for PCBs in schools. Most school building constructed between the 1950s and the late 1970s are highly likely to test positive for these chemicals, potentially endangering the health of students and teachers.

*September 15, 2016*

**EPA, Region 2 Schools with PCBs Associated with Building Materials**

Name of School and Location	Description of Situation	School Response	EPA Response
<p>New York City Public Schools - Caulk and Other Building Materials</p> <p>739 school buildings built between 1950 and 1978 are potentially affected.</p>	<p>In 2008, private parties found PCB-containing caulk on several of the City's school buildings. The results were provided to both EPA and the New York Daily News.</p>	<p>The City entered into discussions with EPA to address the situation.</p>	<p>In January 2010, EPA and the City entered into a Consent Agreement and Final Order (CAFO). Under the CAFO the City performed a Pilot Study to evaluate methods to address PCBs in caulk and in lighting. The results of this evaluation were then used to develop a Preferred City Remedy. EPA approved the Preferred Citywide Remedy on Sept 9, 2016. The Citywide PCB Management Plan shall include, among other items, an initial focus on schools with the highest potential exposure risks. Reasonable testing, including air quality testing for PCBs and/or other methods of evaluation, including air quality evaluation, to characterize PCBs in schools will be performed to help set priorities for remediation and to guide acceptable remediation. EPA R2 will now begin negotiations with the City on a Citywide PCB Management Plan.</p>
<p>New York City Public Schools - Fluorescent Light Ballasts</p> <p>767 school buildings are affected.</p>	<p>During implementation of the Pilot Study (see above), the City found widespread leakage of old fluorescent light ballasts. The ballasts were determined to be a</p>	<p>As a result of NYC not implementing actions to expeditiously remove its old fluorescent lighting, the City was sued by a third party. The City is now under a court-ordered</p>	<p>EPA is tracking ballast failures, monitoring the progress of the light fixture replacements, and performing on-site inspections to ensure that the work is performed in accordance with the federal PCB regulations. The City is on schedule to</p>

	primary source of PCBs into the indoor air.	schedule to remove all of its old lighting by December 31, 2016.	replace its lighting by the December 31 deadline.
<p>New York City Public Schools - Soil</p> <p>739 school buildings built between 1950 and 1978 are potentially affected.</p>	As part of NYC's Capital Improvement Program, the City tests building materials in locations to be renovated and also tests adjacent soil that may be contaminated by PCBs.	PCB-contaminated building materials are disposed in accordance with the federal PCB regulations. If PCB-contaminated soil is found the City submits a cleanup plan to EPA for review and approval.	Since 2008, EPA has reviewed and approved approximately 80 soil cleanup plans for the City.
<b>Name of School and Location</b>	<b>Description of Situation</b>	<b>School Response</b>	<b>EPA Response</b>
Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York	PCB-containing carpet glue (mastic) found during renovations in a University library. The glue contaminated the underlying concrete floor.	Syracuse University submitted an application for isolating the residual PCBs in-place, with long-term monitoring and reporting to EPA.	EPA approved the University's application on June 12, 2014.
New York University (Former Metropolitan Transit Authority Headquarters Building), Brooklyn, New York	PCBs from exterior window caulk and glazing contaminated the limestone building façade.	New York University submitted an application for isolating the residual PCBs in-place, with long-term monitoring and reporting to EPA.	EPA expects to approve New York University's application this summer.
State University of New York (SUNY), Buffalo Campus	Soil contaminated by PCB-containing building materials.	SUNY submitted an application for cleanup and disposal of the PCB-contaminated soil.	EPA approved SUNY's application on March 19, 2013.
French Hill Elementary School, Yorktown Heights, New York	Soil contaminated by PCB-containing building materials.	The Yorktown Central School District submitted an application for cleanup and disposal of the PCB-contaminated soil.	EPA approved the School District's application on July 24, 2012. This was a follow-up to a prior approval issued in 2005.

Northern Catskills Occupational Center, Grand Gorge, New York	The concrete floor in the school was contaminated by a PCB-containing coating.	The Otsego Northern Catskills Board of Cooperative Educational Services (ONC-BOCES) submitted an application for isolating the residual PCBs in-place, with long-term monitoring and reporting to EPA.	EPA approved ONC-BOCES' application on November 6, 2015.
Yonkers Montessori Academy, Yonkers, New York	Soil contaminated by PCB-containing building materials.	Yonkers Montessori Academy submitted an application for cleanup and disposal of the PCB-contaminated soil.	EPA approved the school's application on April 2, 2013.
<b>Name of School and Location</b>	<b>Description of Situation</b>	<b>School Response</b>	<b>EPA Response</b>
Benjamin Franklin Elementary School, Yorktown Heights, New York	Soil contaminated by PCB-containing building materials.	The Lakeland Central School District submitted an application for cleanup and disposal of the PCB-contaminated soil.	EPA approved the School District's application on July 23, 2013.
Brooklawn Middle School, Parsippany, New Jersey	All old fluorescent light ballasts, but not the fixtures, were previously removed from the school. Residue on a fixture dripped onto a paper located on a teacher's desk. The drip was not tested, but the Parsippany-Troy Hills School District believes it came from an overhead fixture.	The School District collected air and wipe samples and coordinated its efforts with the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH).	EPA discussed the situation with the NJDOH and provided technical advice.
Elementary School 29, Paterson, New Jersey	Two instances of leaking fluorescent light ballasts (involving three ballasts).	Paterson Public Schools (PPS) contacted EPA to discuss the situation.	In January 2014, EPA performed a PCB inspection at both the PPS Environmental, Occupational Health & Safety office as well as at the school. There were no visible signs of leakage from the fixtures.

Northeast Elementary School, Ithaca, New York	Soil contaminated by PCB-containing building materials	The Ithaca City School District submitted an application for cleanup and disposal of the PCB-contaminated soil.	EPA approved the School District's application on August 13, 2009.
Whitney Point High School	Masonry contaminated by PCB-containing caulk.	The Whitney Point Central School District submitted an application for cleanup and disposal of the PCB-contaminated masonry.	EPA approved the School District's application on March 28, 2008.
<b>Name of School and Location</b>	<b>Description of Situation</b>	<b>School Response</b>	<b>EPA Response</b>
East Coldenham Elementary School, Newburgh, New York	On January 2, 2013, a concerned parent notified EPA of the presence of leaking light ballasts at the school.	The Valley Central School District prioritized the school for replacement of the lighting.	On February 26, 2013, EPA performed a PCB inspection at the school. During the inspection EPA provided technical guidance to the School District.