BALLAST DEFINITIONS

PCB Ballast

PCBs were used in the manufacturing of fluorescent light ballasts. The use of PCB's in ballasts manufactured prior to 1978 was not regulated by the EPA. All light ballasts manufactured since 1978 which do not contain PCBs should be marked by the manufacturer with the statement "No PCB's". For those manufactured prior to that time , or for those ballasts which contain no statement regarding PCB content, you should assume that they do contain PCB's. Other than a "non-PCB" label, there is no significant marking to indicate whether a ballast contains PCB. PCB ballasts usually are significantly heavier than dry ballasts.

DEHP Ballasts

In 1979, the use of PCBs in small capacitors was banned by TSCA for all fluorescent light ballasts. DEHP, a dielectric fluid, became the closest substitute for the manufactures, and was used in small capacitors found in fluorescent light fixtures from 1980-1991. DEHP, (Di (2-ethylhexyl) phthalate) is a clear, odorless, synthetic chemical in the phthalate family known as dioctyl phthalate "DOP". This dielectric fluid found in most non-PCB ballast capacitors is nearly 80-100% pure. The disposal of DEHP ballasts should be handled with the same precautions as the disposal of PCB containing ballasts. DEHP ballasts are considered wet ballasts since they contain some sort of lubricating oil, or dielectric fluid, for conducting electricity.

non-PCB Ballast

Since 1991, non-PCB ballasts, also known as dry ballasts, which rely on electronics instead of dielectric fluid, have been in use. Because these dry electronic ballasts contain no fluid, they may be sent for electronics recycling.

HID PCB Ballast

This type of ballast is used in high intensity discharge lighting applications.