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Businessmen Sentenced for Improper Handling of Toxic Waste At North Philadelphia Site

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PHILADELPHIA - Two businessmen were sentenced yesterday in federal district court in Philadelphia for violating federal regulations ensuring the safe use, handling and disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a hazardous waste, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Attorney's Office in Philadelphia announced.

Rudolph Robinson of Long Port, Florida, and Ronald Taylor of Philadelphia, Pa., pleaded guilty in fall of 1998, to violating the Toxic Substances Control Act. The government charged that Mr. Robinson, the owner of the former steel fabrication site at 2050 Richmond Street, hired Mr. Taylor, who had done maintenance jobs for Robinson in the past, to dispose of PCB-containing transformers from the North Philadelphia property.

Mr. Robinson -- who pled guilty to failing to prepare and keep a manifest concerning the transportation of PCB waste from the site -- was sentenced to one year probation and a \$5,000 fine. As part of a plea agreement, he paid for the recent removal of approximately 53 tons of material from a 150-foot length of sewer located near his former facility along Dyott Street in Philadelphia which was contaminated with PCBs.

Mr. Taylor -- who pled guilty to accepting the PCB containing waste without a manifest; failing to keep a copy of the manifest; and having the PCBs and PCB transformers disposed of at a location other than an approved incinerator or chemical waste **landfill** -- was sentenced to two years probation with the first three months in home confinement and a \$1,000 fine.


"Today's sentencing sends a clear message that EPA and the Justice Department are committed to enforcement of the laws protecting the environment from PCBs and other toxic substances," said EPA Regional Administrator W. Michael McCabe.


PCBs were commonly used as a non-flammable coolant for transformers and other electrical equipment until the 1970s, when Congress strictly limited the manufacture and use of this toxic substance. PCBs are considered a probable human carcinogen.


This case was investigated by EPA's Criminal Investigation Division and the FBI, with assistance from the City of Philadelphia.

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