Identifying PCB-Containing Lighting Ballasts

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DISCLAIMER:

This information provided serves as a guide only for generators handling and storing PCB-containing lighting ballasts collected under the Product Care Light Recycling program. Product Care cannot assure with certainty the accuracy regarding PCB date stamps and labelling.

Nor is it intended to constitute or provide legal advice. It is the responsibility of the hazardous waste generator to be aware of and abide by any standards, acts, legislation and regulations under Local, Provincial or Federal law.

Product Care accepts no responsibility and assumes no liability resulting from the incorrect use of information in this guideline or from the use of this information in any circumstances other than those described.

1.0 Program Background

The Product Care Light Recycling is a non-profit program to recycle lighting products in British Columbia. Since 2010, LightRecycle has accepted residential-use fluorescent lights at collection sites across the province. As of October 1, 2012 the program accepts all lighting products for recycling without charge, including all types of lights (bulbs and tubes), ballasts and lighting fixtures used in residential, institutional, commercial and industrial applications. Collection options differ based on the product and quantity to be recycled. For more information, please visit www.productcare.org.

The Product care Light Recycling Program was developed in response to the requirements of the B.C. Recycling Regulation and is managed by Product Care Association, a non-profit industry association.

1.1 PCB-Containing Ballasts Background

Some lighting ballasts manufactured prior to July 1, 1980 contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and require special handling. The LightRecycle program will provide a pick-up or courier service to generators with PCB-containing lighting ballasts generated in British Columbia without charge.

1.2 Additional Information Contact

For more information regarding this program or if you have any questions after reading this manual please contact:

Product Care Association
7781 Vantage Way
Delta, BC V4G 1A6

1-888-772-9772 ext. 216
BCdispatchlights@productcare.org

2.0 Lighting Ballasts

Lighting ballasts are replaceable components designed to regulate or transfer the electrical current/energy in a lighting fixture and may be present in fluorescent and other vapour lamps/lighting fixtures in your home, place of business or community institutions. Ballasts manufactured prior to 1980 may contain **Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB)** based oils for cooling and insulation. PCB-containing lighting ballasts are classed as Waste Articles Containing Polychlorinated Biphenyls (class 9, UN2315, PGII) under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations (TDGR).

2.1 Locating Ballasts

Ballasts come in all shapes and sizes. The most common are associated with fluorescent lights and other vapour lamps, also known as high intensity discharge(HID) lamps. They are usually mounted on the lighting fixture between the fluorescent tubes and protected by a metal cover plate.In the case of lighting fixtures with one or more HID lamps, they may be contained in their own separate housing.

2.2 Identifying Ballasts that Contain PCBs

Ballasts manufactured after July 1st, 1980 likely do not contain PCB oils. Generators can recycle their lighting fixtures and ballasts that do not contain PCBs through the scrap metal recycling system, given the high metal content and end-of-life value of these products. A number of recycling options are typically available for those with scrap metal (pick-up through recycling companies, drop-off at scrap metal sites etc.). For more information, including a list of collection sites that accept these products for recycling, please visit www.productcare.org.

Ballasts containing PCBs on the other hand are hazardous waste. This information sheet will help you identify ballasts that contain PCBs and the process for contacting us for disposal.

Only magnetic type ballasts contain PCBs. Newer electronic type ballasts are smaller and lighter. However, the easiest way to tell the difference is to read the label on the ballast and look for **“non PCB,”“no PCB”**or **“PCB free”**wording. If this is **NOT** apparent, check the date/catalogue code of the ballast and refer to the following table:

PCB-Containing Ballasts		
MANUFACTURER	**DATE CODE**	**CATALOGUE CODE**
AEROVOX –CANADA (AE)	AE 7806 OR OLDER (first two digits are year & last two are the month June 1978 = 7806)	FIFTH DIGIT IS "F" F= contains PCBs
AEROVOX –USA (AH)	AH 7806 OR OLDER (first two digits are year & last two are the month June 1978 = 7806)	FIFTH UNIT IS "F" F= contains PCBs
ADVANCE BALLASTS	OLDER THAN 1-79 (Jan 1979 First two digits month, last two digits year)	
ALLANSON		
Fluorescent Lamp ballasts		Between “AA” (1969, Jan) and "LL" (1980,Dec) (first letter is year A=1969,second letter is month A=Jan)
HID Lamps containing capacitors	IF TYPE NUMBER LACKS "N"	Does **NOT** end in ‘N’ = contains PCBs
CGE	NUMBER 8703 AND OLDER (numbers are reversed March 1978 = 8703)	7 letter number digit code Does **NOT** end in E, E1, ER or EW= contains PCBs
GE – USA	Ends in N or A contains PCBs Ends in T = may contain PCBs	Does **NOT** end in E or W =contains PCBs
HOLOPHANE CANADA *HID lamp ballasts*	Capacitor BAAnnn (nnn - numeric sequence)	Does **NOT** end in BAB = contains PCBs
MAGNATEK POLYGON	**"High Power Factor"** appears on label or OLDER THAN (8007 = JULY 1980)	Does **NOT** have a green sticker = contains PCBs
MAGNATEK UNIVERSAL – USA	OLDER THAN A79 (Jan 1979) Alpha numeric A=Jan etc.	does **NOT** have ‘N’ in code or marked non-PCB = contains PCB’s
PHILLIPS		
Fluorescent Lamp Ballasts	1279 OR OLDER (first two digits month & last two are year – Dec, 1979)	
HID Ballasts		MARKED "PCB"
SOLA CANADA		
Fluorescent Ballast	Three digit alpha and number code OLDER THAN A80 (Jan 1980)	A = Jan, etc
HID		Marked ACA =contains PCBs
SOLA – USA	Eight digit alpha and number code OLDER THAN: 79L311EG	A = Jan, etc
WESTINGHOUSE CANADA	SAME AS CGE	SAME AS CGE

Ballasts not included on this table should be considered to contain PCBs if they were manufactured prior to July 1, 1980, do not have any markings to indicate their date of manufacture, or do not have any wording to indicate that they do not contain PCBs.

Non-PCB ballasts will be **REFUSED** for transport. Non-PCB ballasts shipped as PCB ballasts will have their recycling costs charged to the generator.

2.3 Miscellaneous Ballasts

The pictures below show different types of lighting fixtures that may contain HID lamps and PCB-containing ballasts found in commercial and industrial facilities. For lights ballasts from other manufacturers than those listed above, assume that PCBs are present unless the unit is marked **"non PCB,""no PCB"** or **"PCB free**" or is clearly dated 1980 or later.