

Fact Sheet

Ward Transformer Superfund Site



Ward Transformer Superfund Cleanup Site, October 2009

Current cost at \$50 million

Source: Golder Associates http://www.golder.com/cn/en/modules.php?name=Projects&sp_id=70§or_id=42



Ward Transformer *before* Superfund Cleanup

Source: USEPA <http://www.epa.gov/region4/waste/npl/nplnc/wardxfnc.htm>

Ward Transformer Superfund Site

CONTAMINATED FISH

Ward Transformer Sales & Service Inc. has reconditioned electrical transformers at its site near Raleigh-Durham International Airport since 1964. Investigators have found cancer-causing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) on the site and in lower levels in the streams and wetlands below the site. The most common way PCBs get into humans is from eating contaminated fish.

ABOUT PCBs

PCBs, an oil-like chemical used between 1929 and 1990 as a coolant in high-voltage electric transformers, were banned from manufacture in 1979.

PCB health risks

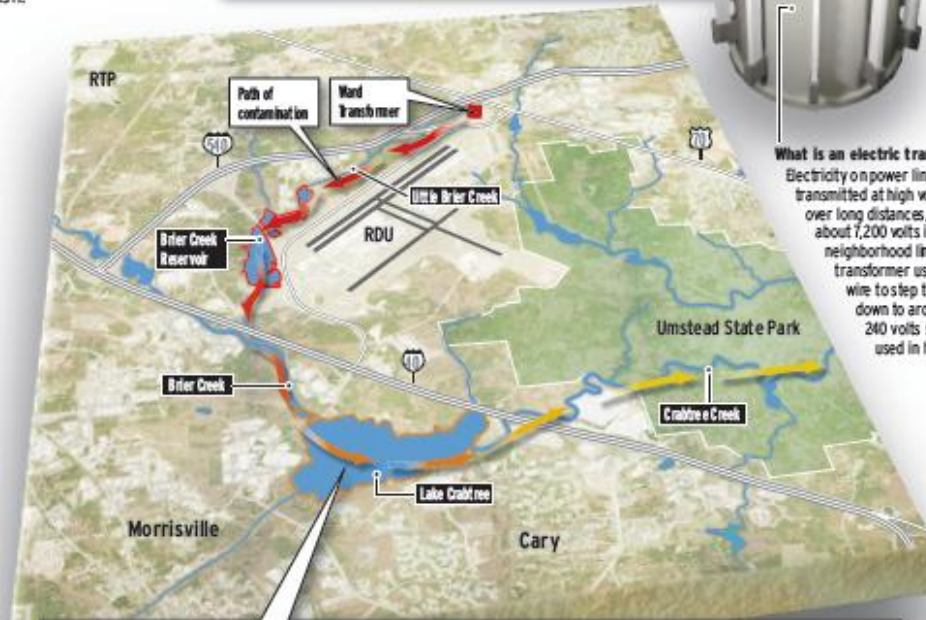
PCBs pervade the environment, decompose slowly and accumulate in the fatty tissues of all organisms in the food chain. In laboratory animals, they have caused reproductive problems, skin lesions and cancerous tumors.

Highly toxic over time in small quantities, PCBs must be disposed of carefully so as not to leak into sewers, water treatment plants and eventually into rivers and streams.



What is an electric transformer?

Electricity on power lines is transmitted at high voltages over long distances, typically about 7,200 volts in neighborhood lines. A transformer uses coils of wire to step the voltage down to around 220 to 240 volts so it can be used in homes.



Fish advisories issued

The State Department of Health issued advisories warning against eating catfish or carp from Lake Crabtree and limiting consumption of other fish to no more than one meal per month because of high PCB levels. It also warns not to eat fish from Brier Creek Reservoir or Brier Creek.

Danger levels

Do not eat any fish from this area.

Limit consumption of fish from these areas.

Fish have been tested, and no advisories have been issued.



CATFISH



CARP

Sources: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, N.C. Department of Health, California Energy Commission

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Source: University of North Carolina Superfund Research Program,

http://www.uncsrp.org/sharing/projects/informing/ward_transformer/ward_transformer.cfm?section=sharing

Available videos on Ward Transformer:

1. Short Film, "Protecting Our Water: PCB Contamination at Ward":

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIWLBROQo278>.

2. Catch and Release Public Service Announcement:

<http://vimeo.com/3095430>

3. Lake Crabtree / Ward Transformer News Update 8/24/05:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBLCuCIm_os&feature=related

For more information visit these websites:

1. USEPA, Ward Transformer Superfund Site Summary Profile: <http://www.epa.gov/region4/waste/npl/nplnc/wardxfnc.htm>.

2. UNC -CH Superfund Research Program on Ward Transformer:

http://www.powershow.com/view/32396-YmVmN/UNC_Superfund_Basic_Research_Program_flash_ppt_presentation