

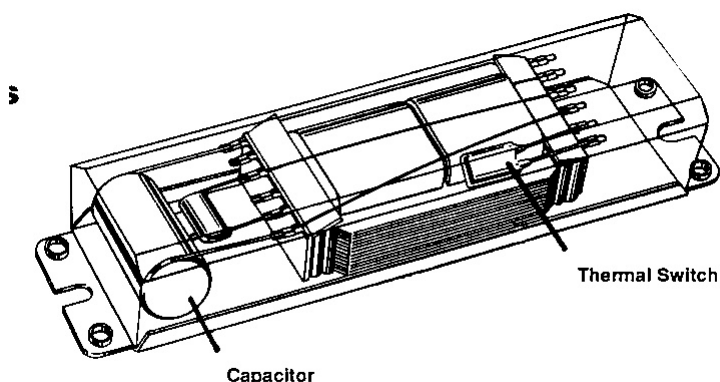
# Work **Safe!** Bulletin

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## PCBs in Electrical Equipment

Fluorescent and High Intensity Discharge lamps have ballasts to maintain a constant current flow through the bulbs. A typical ballast contains a current controlling assembly, a thermal protector and a capacitor. These components are embedded in an asphalt compound and sealed in a steel case. The capacitors of most lamp ballasts manufactured between 1930 and 1980 contain PCBs. The amount of PCB contained in each ballast varies with the size of the unit.

### Example of areas containing PCBs in lamp ballasts manufactured before 1980



#### If a ballast is suspected of leaking PCB these precautions should be taken:

- **Avoid** direct skin contact with the PCB. Wear adequate protective clothing (impervious coveralls, rubber gloves, rubber boots and if necessary face protection), if you are involved in a PCB clean up operation.
- **If any** PCB gets on your skin, immediately wash with soap and water.
- **Remove** any contaminated clothing.
- **Report** any leaking electrical fixtures to the supervisor and maintenance staff
- **Do not attempt** to clean up any fluid from light fixtures unless you have been trained and are well equipped to do so.
- **The area** where any such spill occurs should be isolated to ensure that no-one comes into direct contact with the fluid.
- **PCBs** present an inhalation hazard only under unusual circumstances, (when the PCB is heated to temperatures above 50 C, or when PCB containing equipment is involved in a fire or "burn-out").

- **To prevent** contamination of the environment, leaking PCB containing equipment and materials contaminated with PCBs must be cleaned up and stored up in plastic bags sealed in steel drums pending disposal.
- **For disposal**, Manitoba Conservation should be contacted by phoning 945-7039 or 945-7081. Their 24-hour emergency number is 945-4888.