



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

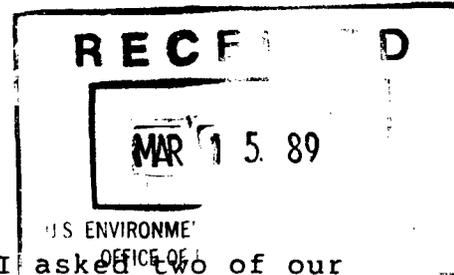
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ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH LABORATORY
SOUTH FERRY ROAD
NARRAGANSETT RHODE ISLAND 02882

October 25, 1988

Site: New Bedford
Brown: Y
Other: _____

Douglas C. Allen
E. C. Jordan Company
261 Commercial Street
Post Office Box 7050
Portland, ME 04112



Dear Doug:

In accordance with your request, I asked two of our chemists (Drs. Jim Lake and Rich Pruell) and Dr. Hap Pritchard from Gulf Breeze to make comments on the chemical and biological degradation of PCBs.

Dr. Pritchard's comments are based on known microbial degradation patterns for PCBs. He believes that Brown's observations on samples from the Hudson River and Silverlake, MA are possible. However, without more specific data for New Bedford Harbor, it would be difficult to predict future degradation under a "no action" scenario.

On a site-specific basis, Drs. Lake and Pruell's observations on sediment cores obtained from a variety of locations within NBH do not appear to demonstrate substantial dechlorination with depth. They are currently analyzing samples collected to bracket those cores collected by Brown. Those samples are being analyzed for over 60 PCB congeners. The results of those analyses will provide more information on the degradation process in NBH, and a firm basis for predicting future distributions of PCBs if the sediments are left undisturbed.

I report for work at Gulf Breeze on December 4. Therefore with travel for SETAC and househunting, I only have nine working days left. If you have any further communication regarding chemical analyses you should contact Dr. Pruell. Dr. Gerry Pesch will replace me as the coordinator of Superfund activities at this laboratory.

Sincerely yours,

Leroy C. Tolman