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EPA ANNOUNCES EXTENSION OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND ADDITIONAL PUBLIC MEETING ON PROPOSED CLEANUP OF PCB "HOT SPOT" AREA IN NEW BEDFORD

BOSTON -- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced a public meeting and extension of the public comment period for EPA's proposed plan to clean up the PCB contaminated "hot spot" at the New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site in New Bedford, MA.

In response to a request by AVX Corporation, one of the parties identified as potentially responsible for harbor contamination, EPA and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will hold a public meeting on Tuesday, August 22, at 7:00 p.m. at the Days Inn, Hathaway Road, New Bedford. The purpose of this meeting will be to allow public review and comment on an alternative to EPA's proposal for cleaning up "hot spot" contamination. The AVX proposal would involve capping contaminated sediments in the harbor.

The public comment period on the "hot spot" cleanup proposal has been extended from September 1 to October 2, 1989 to allow the public time to review and comment on EPA's Public Health Risk Assessment for the site that was released today. This document, along with the EPA Proposed Plan and other documents relating to EPA activities at the site, are available at the New Bedford Free Library, 613 Pleasant Street, New Bedford; the Millicent Library, 45 Center Street, Fairhaven; and at the EPA Records Center, 90 Canal Street, Boston.

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The "hot spot" is a 5-acre area within the Acushnet River estuary that contains highly contaminated sediments. EPA is proposing a 14.4 million dollar plan to remove and treat sediments on-site during a one-year period. EPA's plan would involve dredging the sediments for incineration in an on-site, mobile treatment facility to destroy the contaminants, and providing temporary storage of the treated sediments in an existing shoreline disposal facility. The stored sediments would be addressed in the next phase of the cleanup. The proposal was introduced to the community at a public informational meeting held on August 3, 1989 and initial comments were accepted at a public hearing held on August 16.

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