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# Disposal of Fluorescent Light Ballasts (FLB)

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were commonly used in the small capacitor within fluorescent light ballasts. Ballasts manufactured through 1979 may contain PCBs.

PCB-containing ballasts become a concern if they are leaking or they will be removed and disposed of as hazardous waste. According to EPA Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) regulations, the material must be incinerated. The entire lighting fixture does not need special handling and disposal as long as the ballast (electrical box) is not leaking. The non-leaking ballasts can be removed and recycled or disposed of properly.

PCB-containing FLBs that are currently in use have exceeded their designed life span. Sudden rupture of PCB-containing FLBs may pose health hazards to occupants and is difficult and costly to clean up. EPA recommends removing PCB-containing FLBs from buildings as soon as possible to prevent potential inhalation or dermal exposure.

Even intact PCB-containing FLBs may emit small amounts of PCBs into the air during normal use. Removal of PCB-containing FLBs, as part of lighting upgrades or a stand-alone project, is an investment that may pay off with long-term benefits to students, school staff, the community, and the environment.

-  TSCA Storage Disposal Requirements for Fluorescent Light Ballasts (pdf)  
[<https://epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-08/documents/ballastchart.pdf>](https://epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-08/documents/ballastchart.pdf) (56.21 KB)

Contact Us <https://epa.gov/pcbs/forms/contact-us-about-polychlorinated-biphenyls-pcbs> to ask a question, provide feedback, or report a problem.

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