



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS
1493 CAMBRIDGE STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
498-1349

MELVIN H. CHALFEN, M.D.
COMMISSIONER

Date: February 10, 1984

To: Robert W. Healy
City Manager

From: Melvin H. Chalfen, M.D.
Commissioner of Health & Hospitals

M. H. Chalfen MD

Subject: Emergency EDB Regulations

On February 6, 1984, the Massachusetts Public Health Council adopted an emergency regulation, recommended by the Massachusetts Commissioner of Public Health, Bailus Walker, Jr., governing action levels for ethylene dibromide (EDB) in consumer food products. This regulation stated that food products containing EDB in concentrations of 10 parts per billion (ppb) or more are considered adulterated and, therefore, to be made unavailable for public consumption effective immediately.

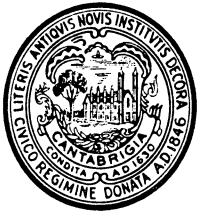
Prior to the adoption of the Massachusetts regulation the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had suggested acceptable levels of EDB in consumer food products greater than levels considered safe by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Upon the adoption of the Massachusetts regulation, the "food industry" sought to overturn the regulation by asking the Massachusetts courts to enjoin DPH from enforcing it.

On February 9, 1984, Judge Zobel of Suffolk Superior Court granted the food industry's request for said injunction. The Commonwealth has appealed this decision to the Supreme Judicial Court.

The Department of Health and Hospitals will stay in close contact with DPH in the monitoring of EDB levels in food and take the necessary actions as indicated and prescribed by DPH.

It should be noted that the issues are long term exposure (years) from grains and fruit, and ground water contamination. The latter has been found in California, Florida, Hawaii and Georgia but there have been no reports to my knowledge, of ground water contamination by EDB in Massachusetts. Adherence to the federal standards is acceptable while the Massachusetts standards are being resolved.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

February 13, 1984

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed for your information is a copy of a communication
from Melvin H. Chalfen, M. D., Commissioner of Health & Hospitals,
~~relative to~~ Emergency EDB Regulations.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mbf
Enc.

Agenda Item Number Seven

S-91
Re: enclosing for informational purposes a
comm. from Dr. Melvin Chalfen RE: Emergency
EDB Regulations.

In City Council,

February 13, 1984

2/13/1984

Placed
on
File