ACSH to Derail "Perc" Lawsuits

By ACSH Staff — February 9, 1999

To the Editor:

Daniel Machalaba alludes to a most dangerous trend, almost as an afterthought ("Local Ties," front page, Feb. 3). He refers to perchloroethylene as a "suspected carcinogen," and then goes on to point out that no one knows "yet" what it's adverse health effects might be. As Mr. Machalaba then points out, this lack of scientific data has not stopped the plaintiff's bar from declaring that "victims" of this contamination should be compensated for "toxic damage."

"Perc" has been in use as a dry-cleaning solvent for over sixty years, and there is no evidence that it has ever caused cancer (or any other disease) in humans, at levels encountered in the environment.

Have we learned nothing from the recent medico-legal nightmare involving the alleged health effects of silicone breast implants? Just because a few lawyers, working in concert with radical environmentalists, declare a substance dangerous, does not make it so.

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