

State units apathetic to use of carbon derivative

Our Bureau

KOLKATA

INDUSTRIAL units in West Bengal, which still rely on carbon tetrachloride (CTC) for cleaning their plants and machinery, seem indifferent that this solvent, an ozone depleting substance, cannot be used after January 1, 2010 as per India's pledge under the Montreal Protocol, 1987.

This has been found by a survey jointly conducted by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the German green firm GTZ Proklima to find out how carbon tetrachloride users in the state are prepared to adhere to the solvent's phase-out deadline.

The survey found that 52% of the respondents out of a sample size of 113 factories are still using the compound for electrical contact or metal cleaning purposes while just 16% of them have switched over to alternative cleaning solvents.

The survey was conducted among industrial units located in the Kolkata municipal area, Hooghly and Haldia.

What's more worrying, according to ICC, is 31% of factories, listed for the survey, refused to give information on the issue.

"This is the concern area. Unless industries understand the seriousness of the issue and identify the right sustainable alternative to CTC for their process application, it will not be possible for them to meet the mandatory requirement within the stipulated time frame," said ICC ex-president Harsh K Jha.

Together with GTZ Proklima, ICC has conducted the survey as part of its commitment to make CTC users of the state aware about its global concerns.

The compound is an ozone depleting substance which is doing immense damage to the environment.