56-66E TOXIC MATERIALS NEWS
E.O.W.

OCT 1 1975 CLIPPED BY BACONS

BOC N.Y. ISSUES COMPLAINT AGAINST GE FOR PCB DISCHARGE INTO HUDSON

Formal complaint against General Electric Co. charging that the firm may have caused "irreparable damage" to the Hudson River by discharging polychlorinated biphenyls into the river for more than 20 years has been issued by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Ogden Reid and an Oct. 6 hearing date has been set. In his statement, Reid advised against eating fish taken from the river.

Officials of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare and DEC have urged U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reconsider GE's discharge permit. Reid said DEC is seeking an abatement order requiring the firm to reduce its daily discharge to 2 lbs. a day by Dec. 31, 1975, and to cease discharge by Sept. 30, 1976. DEC's complaint states that discharges from GE's plants at Fort Edward and Hudson Falls are "a hazard to human health and the natural resources of New York State, likely to cause irreparable damage to the Hudson and likely to result in substantial injury to the river's commercial and recreational fishery."

In response, a spokesman for GE said company offered to continue to work toward the goal of zero discharge, but that "it would be a breach of integrity to make a commitment to achieve zero discharge by a certain date because, at this point in time, we know of no feasible method of achieving such a goal."

Reid subsequently announced an extensive stream monitoring and water testing program to protect New York fisheries against chemical pollutants and other contaminants. "Our first priority is the identification of sources of PCBs," Reid said, noting that an in-depth source study is being prepared for submission to Gov. Carey this month.

* * *