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Ne ate in Boston

Sprague, EPA differ on PCB parley

NORTH ADAMS — Sprague Electric Co. and Environmental Protection Agency officials met yesterday in Boston and have differing interpretations of the meeting's outcome.

The two sides discussed the company's discharge of PCBs into the Hoosac River and how much it must be reduced.

"We are in pretty good agreement," said Bernard Sacks, an agency spokesman.

said Fred A. Windover, corporate counsel for Sprague.

The company and the agency have been involved in protracted negotiations since March on setting a PCB discharge limit before the agency issues the company a water quality permit.

PCB stands for polychlorinated biphenyl, a chemical linked by experiment to a variety of human diseases including genetic defor-

reached "ballpark figures" for discharge limits which the company must reach by July 1, 1977. If the figures are agreed to, the company would be allowed to discharge an average daily amount of .44 ounces a day with a maximum daily discharge of .63 ounces a day. The company now flushes 3.4 ounces of the chemical into the river each day.

"We thing we can get down to the general area they (the EPA) are

Mr. Windover said the company thinks some types of discharge may be outside of its ability to control and that these types may make it difficult to meet the limits.

As an example of these difficult types of discharge, Mr. Windover mentioned a slug of PCB residue in the company's pipes that might wash out, pushing discharge above the limits. He also mentioned a heavy rain that might wash the chemical out

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EPA differ

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pote producer of PCB in the nation, announced Tuesday it will end production of the chemical Oct. 31 next year. Stockpiles of the chemical may allow companies such as Sprague to continue manufacturing PCB products for six months after that date. However, "We are obviously going to be out of the business by March 1978, probably before," said Mr. Windover.

Mr. Windover said the company feels "it is only a matter of months" between the July 1, 1977 deadline the federal agency is shooting for the 1978 date when the company will no longer have PCBs available to it. Because of this, the company feels the agency should be lenient in its enforcement of the earlier deadline.

In the past, the agency has argued the company should not wait until it can no longer purchase PCBs before introducing methods to reduce discharge because discharge is likely to continue even after use of the chemical has ended.

It has cited examples similar to those mentioned by Mr. Windover to show that the chemical leaves a residue in the ground and in pipes which will continue to seep out long after the company has stopped using it.

Mr. Windover said, "There is something to the argument, but we don't think it will be as much of a problem as the EPA thinks."

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