

SCRIPT OF PCB PORTION OF NEWSCAST ON WRGB, CHANNEL 6, TUESDAY, SEPT. 9, 1975
6:00 P.M.

WITH JIM WILLIAMS

CRAIG: PCB's in the Hudson River from two North Country plants. The State has charged the Company may have done irreparable harm to the Hudson River. Jim Williams has been following that story. Jim, what is the latest?

WILLIAMS: GE officials regard polychlorinated biphenyls or PCBs as vital ingredients to the manufacture of capacitors. They use thousands of pounds of the chemical each day in their plants at Hudson Falls and Fort Edward. Dr. Edward Simons, who heads the Company's Environmental Protection Operation, says that a very small amount of the substance is presently being discharged in the Hudson. I spoke with Simons and Stuart Richel, the Company's Environmental Legal Counsel. Simons says the chemical is not being dumped in the river but is lost in small portions at various stages of a complex manufacturing process.

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SIMONS:

And it is through these paths that the discharges to the Hudson River occur. These are losses that occur at various stages in the manufacturing operations, and our program to date has been to identify and plug up all of those losses, and it is through that method that we have achieved the significant reductions from 30 or 40 pounds a day to the point where we are now losing less than 5 pounds a day and expect to be down next year to one pound a day, which is equivalent to something like less than a soda pop bottle per day of inadvertent losses. It is not dumping.

WILLIAMS: Attorney Richel says that GE technical experts have had a series of meetings with counterparts of the State Environmental Department to further reduce PCB discharges at the two New York Country plants. Richel said that the Company cannot achieve a 50 percent discharge of the chemical by the end of 1976. The State is now proposing an order to that effect.

RICHEL: If one is faced with an order the terms of which are unfavorable there must be a consideration by management of available alternatives. I cannot sit here now and tell you that the Company would make a decision to shut those plants. I have no right to make such a decision nor do I have any knowledge of such decision making. However, one of the options by law would have to be a consideration of the economic impact.

WILLIAMS: The current controversy was begun in July when the Federal Environmental Protection Agency transmitted to the State its findings of a study of the upper Hudson undertaken early in 1974. The State Department of Environmental Conservation then conducted its own study. Of prime concern was the discovery of high concentrations of PCBs in fish. Meanwhile the State Health Department released findings which indicate that, while PCB can be found in the waters of the Hudson, it does not presently constitute a health hazard. In any case, ENCON has scheduled a public hearing on October 6 on PCBs and a final order should follow some time thereafter. I'm Jim Williams, Channel 6 News.