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PCB FOUND IN FISH IN THREE MORE N.Y. WATERWAYS

The New York State Environmental Conservation Department began planning a long-range program to combat PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) after finding tainted fish in three more State waterways just weeks after learning fish in two others contained more than the Federally-mandated maximum of five parts PCB per million of flesh. In addition, General Electric Company has been ordered to stop discharging the toxic chemical into the Hudson River, on threat of economic retribution.

In August (see "MRD," August, 1975) N.Y. Environmental Commissioner *Ogden Reid* warned consumers not to eat Hudson River bass or Lake Ontario salmon because State and Federal researchers had found dangerously high levels of PCB in those fish. In mid-September, he disclosed that additional findings indicate several species of fish in the St. Lawrence River, the Mohawk River and Lake Champlain are possibly unfit for human consumption. Recent tests on small mouth bass, walleyed pike, white suckers and chinook salmon in the five waterways reportedly yielded results ranging from 6.6 ppm to 53.5 ppm PCB.

PCB, which is used in the manufacture of electrical equipment, printing inks, paints and hydraulic fluids, is not readily soluble in water; but once ingested it is highly soluble in fats, and concentrates in the underbellies and eggs of fish, researchers say. The chemical is believed to cause liver cancer in mink rats and chimpanzees; its effect on humans remains under study, although it has reportedly caused stillbirths, miscarriages and skin diseases.

The long-range program being prepared by Reid's office for submission to *Governor Carey* includes: an in-depth source-study; hiring of additional fish pathologists; expansion of the testing labs at Delmar and Rome, N.Y.; and extension of the monitoring program to include fish, sediments and aquatic wild fowl in and around Lake George and the Finger Lakes, the reservoirs and rivers of New York City's watershed and Long Island Sound.

GE, said to be only company discharging PCB into the Hudson River, (from its Ft. Edwards and Hudson Falls plants) and ordered by Reid to end the dumpings after September, 1976 or forfeit a required $2 million performance bond, has said that it is not technologically possible. Reid has ordered a hearing on the matter.

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