EPA TO ACT WHERE STATE PROGRAMS ARE FALTERING

As part of new Federal program to bolster lagging state efforts to curb industrial pollution, Environmental Protection Agency has issued 180-day notices to Patrician Paper of South Glens Falls, N.Y., and Brown Paper Co., Castleton-on-Hudson, N.Y., to develop pollution control programs.

EPA will concentrate on those industries having severe pollution problems, pressuring all companies so that a firm cannot say it is being singled out while others go free. Initial efforts will begin in the region comprised of New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands, against plants producing (1) pulp and paper; (2) chemicals; (3) petrochemical products; and (4) those having fermentation wastes, particularly breweries and pharmaceutical plants.

Gus J. Bennett, director of enforcement for the region, said the states often have difficulty in pressing for clean-up because companies threaten to move elsewhere. Patrician and Brown were issued state orders to cut pollution 18 months ago, but neither has yet begun. Patrician discharges 1.5-million gallons of wastewater per day into the Hudson, and Brown 1.5-million into Moordaner Kill, Hudson tributary.

* * *

AROUND THE STATES -- WATER

CALIFORNIA -- State is threatening to withhold funds for the already approved $3.9-million Los Angeles-Glendale water reclamation plant, $2.3-million coastal interceptor sewer and $3.5-million Hyperion digestor plant unless city steps up construction schedules for sludge-removal projects and agrees to halt ocean dumping.

ILLINOIS -- Authority for protecting environmental quality of Lake Michigan is placed with state in bill passed by Illinois House and sent to the Senate. Local municipalities presently have jurisdiction. Bill bans discharge of municipal and industrial wastes and storm runoff into the lake, requires development of waste management plan for lake watershed, and outlaws offshore drilling and mining unless state-approved.

MARYLAND -- Permits must be obtained from Department of Water Resources for any discharge of water exceeding 10,000 gallons per day or of any wastewater, for construction or modification of wastewater treatment system, change in characteristics or volume of effluents, and construction of wastewater outlet, under new regulations.

NEW YORK -- Considerations of health outweigh need to replenish the dwindling Long Island water table, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said Jan. 3, in recommending that Suffolk and Nassau Counties delay recharging groundwater drinking supplies with treated sewage waste until research indicates such action will not affect the public health or potability of water used for domestic purposes.

OHIO -- Mercury levels in white bass and walleye from Lake Erie, particularly older and larger fish, remain above the safe level as Ohio continues ban on the species, state Agriculture Department reports. Discharges of mercury into the lake have been discontinued by General Electric Corp., and Glidden-Durkee, Cleveland; Reactive Metals, Inc., Ashtabula; and NASA's Lewis Research Center. Of the three other mercury dischargers in Ohio, Bailey Meter Co., Wickliff, plans to halt discharges in March, Datrex Chemical Co., Ashtabula, discharges trace amounts, and Harshaw Chemical, Elyria, which stopped using mercury in its process last year, cannot find the source of the metal still being detected.

TENNESSEE -- Temperature of 87°F is maximum allowable for most lakes and streams under standards adopted by State Water Quality Control Board and awaiting Federal approval. Present limit is 93°F. Under the proposed regulations, increases in water temperature are limited to no more than 5°, and no more than 3° per hour.

WEST VIRGINIA -- About $2-million will be spent in joint government-industry, two-year reclamation project designed to clean up both surface damage and water pollution resulting from abandoned coal mines in Dents Run watershed, just across Monongahela River from Morgantown. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will contribute $672,000, state Department of Natural Resources, $289,392, and Consolidation Coal Co., more than $1-million.

WISCONSIN -- PCB level declined from 0.31 ppb in Peshtigo River and 0.45 ppb in Oconto River, in November, 1970, to less than 0.01 ppb last summer, according to University of Wisconsin. Safe level is 0.05 ppb.

MONS 086236