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GE states its case

General Electric will present a second round of testimony this week at New York hearings on discharges of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from its two capacitor plants at Fort Edward and Hudson Falls, N.Y. The New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation says GE's discharges into the Hudson River violate water pollution and fish and wildlife regulations and wants them ended entirely by next September (*CW, Sept. 17, p. 19*).

Edward L. Simons, GE manager of environmental protection, stated last week at the Albany hearings that the company is working on a plan to reduce discharges, now about 2.5 lbs./day, to 3.5 oz./day from both plants. But Simons contended the company couldn't commit itself to that level "when we don't know if the limit that may result from this hearing is achievable." Another witness, Gerald Lauer of Ecological Analysts (Middletown, N.Y.), said that fish samples taken from the river above and below the plants contained levels of PCBs far below the 5 parts per million allowed by the Food and Drug Administration. But under questioning, he conceded there were also some fish that contained PCBs above FDA limitations.

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GE says it will provide more data on the fish samplings and will do some new analyses. The state has already presented its case but says it may rebut the GE testimony, then hold hearings on appropriate remedies.

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