NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF

ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSERVATION

# FACT SHEET

**Hudson River PCB Remediation**
Hudson Falls and Fort Edward, NY
October 1994

# PCB Remedial Programs at Hudson Falls and Ft. Edward GE Plants

Remedial investigations and corrective actions to deal with sources of PCB contamination are being undertaken at both the Hudson Falls and Fort Edward GE plants. The Hudson River PCB contamination problem continues to be the subject of considerable public interest and concern. This fact sheet and the scheduled availability sessions and public meetings (**see sidebar at left**) are intended to keep you informed and knowledgeable about the PCB problem and the efforts to address it.

## Citizen Participation

The scheduled *availability sessions* are gatherings of public and staff in a setting less formal than a public meeting. There are no structured presentations. The sessions encourage "one-to-one" discussions in which the public meets with staff on an individual or small group basis to discuss questions or concerns.

The *public meetings* scheduled will include structured presentations about the progress of investigating and remediating PCB contamination at the GE Hudson Falls and Fort Edward plants. The meetings also are designed to encourage public questions and discussion.

A *responsiveness summary* will be developed and distributed which will address the public's questions and comments received at the availability sessions and public meetings.

***Document Repositories.*** Two locations provide you access to project information:

Washington County Clerk's Office
383 Upper Broadway
Fort Edward, NY 12828

Adriance Public Library
93 Market Street
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

***For More Information.*** Call or write the following staff for more information:

**About Remedial Programs at the Fort Edward GE Plant:**
Kevin Farrar, Project Manager
Div. of Hazardous Waste Remediation
NYSDEC
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12233-7010
(518)457-5637

**About Remedial Programs at the Hudson Falls GE Plant**
Jim Ludlam, Project Manager
Div. of Hazardous Waste Remediation
NYSDEC
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12233-7010
(518)457-5637

Or call NYSDEC's Hazardous Waste Site Toll-Free Information Number:
**1-800-342-9296**

## Availability Sessions:

**Thur. Nov. 10, 1994 3-5 p.m.**
**Washington Co. Offices**
**Bldg. B, Large Conf. Room**
**383 Upper Broadway**
**Fort Edward, NY 12828**

**Thur. Nov. 17, 1994 3-5 p.m.**
**Radisson Hotel**
**40 Civic Center Plaza**
**Poughkeepsie, NY 12601**

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# PCB REMEDIATION PROJECTS: UPDATE

## GE Hudson Falls Plant Site

### *Site Background*

The General Electric Hudson Falls Plant Site is a 17 acre facility in the Village of Hudson Falls, Washington County. Located on the east shore of the Hudson River, it has been used for the manufacture of electrical capacitors since the 1950's.

A field investigation was performed by GE at the Hudson Falls Plant Site under a Consent Order signed with NYSDEC in 1986-7. After the investigation, the site was classified as a Class 2 site (significant threat to human health and the environment).

A Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) was begun by GE in 1988, also under a signed Consent Order, which led to a Record of Decision (selected remedy) in March 1993 for part of the site (Operable Unit 1).

Identification of a significant groundwater contamination problem, coupled with data from the Hudson River showing the existence of an ongoing source of PCB to the Hudson River, led to the expansion of the RI/FS for this site. The site has been divided into three parts for management purposes: Operable Unit 1 (OU1), Operable Unit 2 (OU2) and Operable Unit 3 (OU3).

There are two priorities to the work being carried out:

- Completion of the RI/FS and identification of permanent remedial measures for the site.
- Identification and completion of Interim Remedial Measures (IRMs) to contain or remove PCB contamination that might be a threat to the offsite environment.

To date, GE with DEC approval has undertaken seven Interim Remedial Measures. An eighth IRM is proposed and two others are under design. IRMs completed or underway include: the removal of about 40 tons of PCBs from the Allen Mill area; grouting of PCB seeps identified in the River bottom; rerouting of the Sumpter Street sewer and excavation of old pipes that served as possible conduits of contaminated groundwater toward the river. Construction of a major new wastewater plant to treat contaminated groundwater is planned for early 1995. Discussions are underway between DEC and GE technical staffs to identify possible remedies for the site in advance of the investigation's 1995 scheduled completion date.

### *GE Hudson Falls Plant Site Operable Unit One*

Operable Unit 1 (OU#1) consists of an area between the manufacturing buildings and the rail line that cuts through the site. The area contains about 3000 cubic yards of soil containing an average of about 2000 parts per million of PCB. The remedy selected for this Operable Unit was excavation and offsite disposal of the soils that contained greater than 10 parts per million of PCB. The remedial action for OU1 has been suspended following discovery of high levels of PCB beneath several buildings on the site, and that the backfill to be placed in the excavated areas would rapidly become recontaminated by way of groundwater interaction.

Following completion of the remedial investigation for OU2 (see below), a new remedy will be selected and implemented based on new findings.

### *GE Hudson Falls Plant Site Operable Unit Two*

Operable Unit Two consists of the remainder (other than OU1) of the Plant site, including areas impacted by the site that are not physically in the Hudson River. It specifically includes known or potential pathways for transport of source contaminants to the river.

It is anticipated that the investigation of OU2 will be completed by the Spring of 1995, when the study and selection of a remedy will begin.

Locations identified in OU2 as known or potential sources of contamination are: Tank Farm (Bldg. 1A), the Refined Product Storage Area (in the rear of Bldg. 1), the Former Railroad Offload Area (in the rear of Bldg. 1 and 1A), and the basement of Bldg. 1, where capacitors were filled. Several Interim Remedial Measures (IRMs) have been performed in OU2 to address priority problems. They included:

- Cleaning and rerouting of the Sumpter St. municipal sewer, which was heavily contaminated with PCB, and which may have been a preferential pathway for contaminant migration to the river;
- Removal of six former wastewater outfall pipes, including the former 002 outfall pipe, which posed the highest threat for preferential pathway contaminant migration to the river.
- Cleaning and relining of the wastewater collection basins at the site, which contained sludges with high levels of PCB;

The Remedial Investigation for OU2 has led to identification of a plume of PCB oil and contaminated groundwater beneath the site, a portion of which is migrating toward the Hudson River. Efforts are now underway to determine the nature and extent of this contamination. More than 30 monitoring wells have been installed at the site to date, and additional wells will be installed to complete the effort.

### *GE Hudson Falls Plant Site Operable Unit Three*

Operable Unit Three consists of areas adjacent to the Plant site property, including: Allen Mill and associated raceway structures; the abandoned Niagara Mohawk Powerhouse and Tailrace Tunnel. These areas were identified in 1992 as containing significant concentrations of PCB.

Sediments in the Eastern Raceway and Tailrace Tunnel were sampled in 1993. NYSDEC estimated at that time that significant amounts of PCB remained in these areas, with the majority of the contamination located in the Tailrace Tunnel.

Additional remedial investigations have been conducted in OU3. These include:

- Soil borings and samples at the southern end of the Eastern Raceway.
- Underwater inspection above the Bakers Falls Dam and near the former GE pumphouse/Outfall area.
- Tailrace Tunnel inspection.
- Seep inspections.
- Lower Raceway inspection.

GE agreed to perform Interim Remedial Measures to collect seepage and remove the contaminated sediments from affected areas. These measures have been implemented. GE estimated that about 2500 tons of sediment containing about 40 tons of PCB were removed from the Eastern Raceway and Tailrace Tunnel.

This summer an area of the River was dewatered as part of a planned reconstruction of the Baker's Falls Dam. An IRM, the lower Raceway Gate Repair to negate river water infiltration through the leaking gate, was implemented during this dewatering. In addition, PCB oil seepage was observed in the area behind the Wing Dam--the Wing Dam seeps--which GE also addressed. GE collected and treated PCB-contaminated water and visible PCB product. GE pressure grouted and pumped from the bedrock in the northern end of the Eastern Raceway between the Mill and the new dam structure in an effort to stop the flow of contaminant to the River. This work was completed prior to re-watering of this area. Hudson River monitoring is continuing as part of the Remnant Deposits Remedial Project.

## GE Fort Edward Plant Site

GE's Fort Edward plant is located on a 32-acre tract by Route 4 in the Town of Fort Edward. The plant is about 800 feet east of the Hudson River. The plant has manufactured capacitors since 1942. PCBs were used until 1976. Other products used on the site include solvents such as trichloroethane.

At the Fort Edward site, GE has been conducting extensive on-site and off-site remedial and monitoring activities for more than 10 years. PCBs and volatile organic compounds were identified in groundwater on the site during the 1970s and 1980s. In accordance with the 1989 consent order, GE established an off-site groundwater recovery system and conducted off-site groundwater monitoring. Under the 1990 on-site remedial plan, GE removed contaminated soils and pumped and treated contaminated groundwater on and in the vicinity of the site. This work continues.

### *004 Outfall Area*

In August 1993, the NYS Department of Health sampled near the GE Fort Edward Outfall effluent stream at the bottom of the cliff by the Hudson River. The result of this sample (17 parts per billion PCB) was significantly high enough to cause concern for this area. Additional sampling data showed significant soil contamination at the bottom of the cliff in riverbank soils next to the river. The data suggested that effluent water was picking up PCB contamination from the soils as it was passing through before entering the river. In March, GE signed a Consent Order to investigate this area and install a new discharge pipe to reroute this discharge into the river instead of through the sediments.

Additional soil sampling was conducted in June and the results show significant PCB contaminated soils on the river bank near the discharge pipe area. Water column sampling in the Hudson River conducted above and below this area showed an increase in PCB concentrations through this area.

In response to this, GE installed four test pits between the Plant Site and the top of the cliff along the line of the old outfall sewer. The samples show significant PCB concentrations in the former discharge pipe bedding (up to 21,000 parts per million). GE will be reporting the results and making recommendations on the contaminated areas.

GE has also removed the old outfall pipe from the last manhole to the edge of the bluff (approximately 40 feet) along with numerous truck loads of contaminated soils.

On October 5, 1994 GE delivered two important documents to DEC:

(1) Additional workplans to address the 5-year reassessment of the 1989 remedial action;

(2) A second workplan to combine the RCRA module III permit with an overall facility RI/FS.

Concurrently with the outfall IRM, GE has surveyed 46 adjacent homes served by private water supplies. Three homes have been shown to have contaminated wells. However, 25 have taken a GE offer for connection to the public water supply.