

# GE Begins Dredging of Upper Hudson River

FORT EDWARD, N.Y. (AP) — The main phase of a massive dredging project designed to rid the upper-Hudson River in New York of PCBs began Monday after weeks of delays due to high waters.

General Electric Co., officials said two dredges began operations in the river about 40 miles north of Albany at Fort Edward early Monday.

Work crews had tentatively planned to start the second phase of river dredging in early May but heavy rains kept river levels too high to work effectively. GE spokesman Mark Behan said the company will still try to meet the federal Environmental Protection Agency's goal of removing 350,000 cubic yards of sediment before the end of the season, despite the later start.

"Meeting that goal will be a challenge, but we are going to do our very best," Behan said.

Fairfield, Conn.-based GE, which released PCBs into the river decades ago, said dredging will start on a limited basis and gradually ramp up to 24 hours a day, six days a week through October. PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, were once used as coolants in electrical equipment and are a suspected carcinogen.

The federal Superfund project is expected to take five to seven years to complete and could end up costing more than \$1 billion.

GE oversaw the cleanup of about 10 percent of the contaminated sediment in 2009, but paused operations for a year to give independent scientists time to assess the work.

In order to increase efficiency and kick up fewer PCBs, crews this year will cut deeper to remove more contamination with fewer passes.

Contaminated sediment is being shipped down the nearby Champlain Canal to a "dewatering" plant, where it is being pressed dry. The treated contaminants will be shipped by train to one of several burial sites outside of New York.

The water will be treated.

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