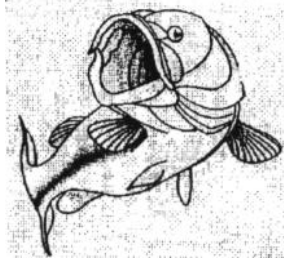


Toxic chemicals taint fish

A new EPA report shows that freshwater fish throughout the nation are tainted by a wide array of toxic chemicals, including some that are carcinogenic. A look at several of those carcinogens along with the places having the highest risk. The list also shows the fish species tested. All told, the EPA tested fish at 388 sites nationwide.



DDT (Dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane)

Detected in 99% of test sites, dichlorodiphenyl dichloroethane is formed by a chemical breakdown of the banned pesticide DDT.

WATERWAY	CITY	FISH
Alamo River	Calipatria, Calif.	Flathead catfish
Waukegan Harbor	Waukegan, Ill.	Lake trout
Blanco Drain	Salinas, Calif.	Squawfish
Mississippi River	Memphis	Channel catfish/Largemouth bass
Delaware River	Torresdale, Pa.	Channel catfish

PCBs (Polychlorinated biphenyls)

Detected in 91% of sites, PCBs used as transformer coolant, hydraulic fluid, industrial lubricant. U.S. production banned in 1970, but contamination persists through illegal or unintentional use.

WATERWAY	CITY	FISH
Little Valley Creek	Paoli, Pa.	Brown trout
Waukegan Harbor	Waukegan, Ill.	Lake trout
Hudson River	Fort Miller, N.Y.	Largemouth bass
Milwaukee River	Milwaukee	Northern pike
Lake Ontario	Olcott, N.Y.	Chinook salmon

CHLORDANE

Detected in 62.5% of test sites, chlordane is a pesticide used primarily to control termites, but has been off U.S. market since 1989. Causes convulsions, depression, liver damage.

WATERWAY	CITY	FISH
Waukegan Harbor	Waukegan, Ill.	Lake trout
Delaware River	Torresdale, Pa.	Channel catfish
Lake Ontario	Olcott, N.Y.	Chinook salmon
Mississippi River	Memphis	Channel catfish/Largemouth bass
Mississippi River	Quincy, Ill.	Carp

MIREX

Detected in 38% of test sites, mirex is a pesticide used throughout the South to control fire ants. Can cause birth defects. Found in groundwater supplies after seeping through the soil.

WATERWAY	CITY	FISH
Lake Ontario	Olcott, N.Y.	Chinook salmon
Lake Ontario	Rochester, N.Y.	Brown trout
Mississippi River	East St. Louis, Ill.	Catfish
Oswego Harbor	Oswego, N.Y.	Smallmouth bass
Niagara River Delta	Porter, N.Y.	Smallmouth bass

Source: Environmental Protection Agency

By Marty Baumann, USA TODAY

Warnings about eating fish ignored

By Robert Davis
and Rae Tyson
USA TODAY

Most states warn people not to eat fish they catch, but many anglers say they often ignore those safety warnings.

News of an Environmental Protection Agency report on fish contamination - and possible cancer risk - Thursday did little to arouse concern.

Sue Demorest, 36, owner of a bait and tackle shop in Burt, N.Y., near Lake Ontario, says most of her customers and neighbors eat fish they catch.

"They don't seem very concerned," she says.

Timothy Horanburg, town supervisor in nearby Newfane, N.Y. says news of fish hazards don't scare anglers anymore.

"The sport of catching fish is what's important to these people," he says. "I don't think they're all that concerned about pollutants.

"Sometimes," he says, "I think the fishermen don't know who the hell to believe."

Ken McGuire, owner of Mac's Fishing Camp in Escatawpa on Mississippi's Pascagoula river, doesn't doubt fish in the river are unfit to eat.

"We're still catching fish with sores," he says. "I haven't eaten a fish out of this river since" a state advisory was issued in 1990. "I certainly have a fear of cancer," he says.

In the same time he's also watched his business die. "The fear is still there," he says.

McGuire sued International Paper and Georgia-Pacific for \$110 million in damages from dioxin contamination from their paper mills.

Many Native Americans must either face a health risk or give up a dietary staple.

Says Maxine Caldwell of the Assembly of First Nations: "Its not just hunting, fishing and trapping. For First Nation people, it's a way of life."

Experts say toxic chemicals enter waterways from leaky dumps, industrial discharges and farm runoff. Chemicals accumulate in fatty tissue, which is why contamination levels are usually higher in older fish.

"Every meal of those fish means another does of chemical," says the National Wildlife Federation's Mark Van Putten.

But in Georgia, where three areas have fish consumption restrictions, state toxicologist Randall Manning says many anglers don't heed warnings.

"People just ignore them," he says. "It's human nature."

He wants to find more persuasive ways to warn anglers.

"I'm not sure we'll ever have a really good way of knowing how people take these," he says. "All we can do is make the information available to every angler. If we've done that, we've done the best we can."