

www.michigan.gov  
(To Print: use your browser's print function)

Release Date: November 14, 2007

Last Update: November 14, 2007

**Contact:** James McCurtis, Jr. (517) 241-2112

**Agency:** Community Health

---

## MDCH Issues Interim Fish Consumption Advisory For The Saginaw River

---

November 14, 2007

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) is issuing an Interim Fish Consumption Advisory for the Saginaw River. This action extends the advisory currently in effect for the Tittabawassee River to the entire length of the Saginaw River.

MDCH has issued this Interim Advisory in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Very high levels of dioxins have been found in sediments in the middle of the Saginaw River channel just off shore Wickes Park. The sediment sample was taken by contractors working for the Dow Chemical Company as part of the on-going investigation of contamination in the Tittabawassee and Saginaw Rivers. Fish living or migrating in the Saginaw River will accumulate dioxins, mostly in the fatty tissue. People who eat these fish will in turn take dioxins into their bodies.

Dioxins are a group of chemicals that have similar structures and chemical properties, and are usually found together in the environment. The health effects associated with dioxins may include cancer, reproductive or developmental effects, and effects on the immune system.

New information about dioxin concentrations in fish samples taken from the Saginaw River will be available in the next few weeks. Until then, the MDCH recommends that people follow these advisories for eating fish caught in the Saginaw River:

- No one should eat carp, catfish, or white bass.
- Women of childbearing age and children under the age of 15 should not eat smallmouth bass.
- All other people are advised to eat no more than one meal of smallmouth bass per week.
- Women of childbearing age and children under the age of 15 should eat no more than one meal per month of walleye less than 22 inches in length and 6 meals per year of larger walleye.
- All other people are advised that walleye smaller than 22 inches may be eaten in unlimited quantities, but larger walleye should be eaten no more often than once per week.
- For all other species of fish caught in the Saginaw River, women of childbearing age and children under the age of 15 should eat no more than one meal per month and all other people may eat these fish as often as they wish.

The Michigan Family Fish Consumption Guide can be found at [www.michigan.gov/mdch](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch) or by calling 1-800-648-6942.

Copyright © 2008 State of Michigan