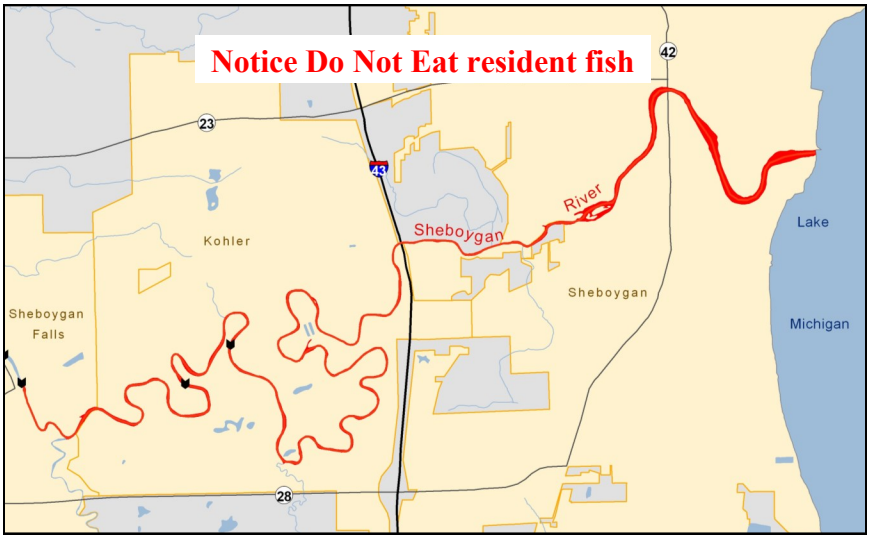
Fish Consumption Advice for the Sheboygan River Area of Concern



Benefits of eating your catch

Fish are a nutritious family food. Some of the benefits of catching and eating 1-2 servings of fish per week include:

- Low cost and fun to catch your own fish
- Low in fat, yet high in protein
- Great source of vitamins, minerals, and omega-3 fatty acids

However, resident fish from the Sheboygan river should not be consumed due to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Trout and salmon that come up river from Lake Michigan are subject to the Lake Michigan PCB advisory. *(see table on page 2 for advice on trout and salmon from Lake Michigan).*

What are Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)?

PCBs are man-made chemicals that were used in electrical equipment, industrial processes, and manufacturing and recycling of carbonless copy paper. PCBs were discharged into the Sheboygan River for decades before it was discovered that these chemicals build up in the environment and pose health risks to humans and wildlife. Restrictions on PCB use, manufacturing, and disposal began in the 1970's, but PCBs remain in the sediment of the river. Efforts are underway to remediate contaminants in the sediments of the Sheboygan River. For more information please visit http://www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/sheboygan/

Tell me about PCBs in fish and what types of fish are safe to eat

- PCBs are resistant to degradation and bioaccumulate to higher concentrations through the food chain
- Younger, smaller fish have lower amounts of PCBs than larger, older predator fish
- PCBs accumulate in the fatty tissue, so fatty fish such as carp and catfish have higher levels of PCBs.
- No resident fish in the Sheboygan River are currently safe to eat

Why are the health risks?

PCBs are stored in your body fat for years. Your health risk may increase as you eat more fish that are high in PCBs. Health risks include:

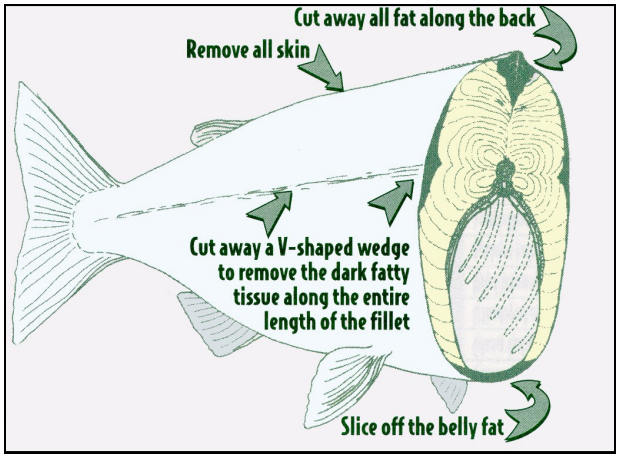
- Developmental impairments in children
- Harmful to the reproductive system
- Associated with a higher risk of cancer
- Harmful to the immune system
- Alters thyroid hormones

Sheboygan River at Esslingen Park

How should I prepare and cook my fish?

Proper cleaning and cooking techniques can reduce PCB levels by up to 70%. Follow the following preparation techniques:

- Fillet your fish
- Remove the skin
- Trim away belly fat, fat on the backsides and fatty dark meat
- Do not eat the eggs
- Bake, broil, or grill
- Discard all liquids and frying oils



Meal Size	
Weight (lbs)	**Precooked fish (oz.)**
225	12
154	8
77	4
40	2
3.0 oz ~ deck of cards	

The size of your meal depends on how much you weigh. Use the table to left as a serving size guideline as you follow the fish consumption advice in the table below.

Women of childbearing age and children under 15 should be especially careful to follow the meal sizes and space fish meals out according to the advisory tables.

Sheboygan River - Sheboygan Falls downstream to Lake Michigan

DO NOT EAT RESIDENT FISH

Lake Michigan trout and salmon from Sheboygan River

Eat no more than 1 meal per week	Eat no more than 1 meal per month		
Steelhead (0-22”)	Steelhead (22+”)		
	Coho salmon	Chinook salmon	Brown trout

See Wi DNR’s website : http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/consumption

Summer 2013