MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.
(m) 236,000 (s) 665,000

MAY 1 4 1975

CLIPPED BY BACONS

1800

Chemical is found in carp

By Ron Schara
Staff Writer

An estimated 20,000 pounds of carp filets from Lake Pepin on the Mississippi River have been buried because of suspected high concentrations of a cancer-causing chemical.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) officials in Minneapolis said Tuesday that the fish, belonging to a Wisconsin fish wholesaler, were disposed of last week when sample tests indicated that levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, an industrial chemical, exceeded federal guidelines.

Henry Roberts, FDA director, said the concentration of poly-chlorinated biphenyls, commonly called "PCB's," in the fish flesh ranged from about six to 14 parts per million. He said the federal guideline for PCB's in food for human consumption is five parts per million.

He said that in animal tests high PCB concentrations have caused cancer.

Although the problem of PCB contamination is serious, Robert said, a person would have to eat the carp every day for about three years be-

Carp continued on page 6A

1800 Cf

Carp

Continued from page 1A

fore high levels of PCB's might be measured in his body.

Roberts said that PCB levels in game fish in Lake Pepin, a wide spot on the river between Red Wing and Wabasha, Minn., have not been thoroughly tested.

"We are not particularly concerned about the sport fisherman because of the low number of fish caught and eaten by an individual. But also we have no controls over what anybody does with a fish caught by hook and line for personal use," said Roberts.

Roberts said the contaminated carp had been shipped to the East Coast for sale. The fish were checked by FDA officials in New York and then returned to Pepin, Wis., by Rudolph Hogue, a fish wholesaler and owner of the shipment.

Hogue said yesterday that the destroyed carp were worth between $1,500 and $1,800. He said he had another estimated 20,000 pounds of filets which also may have to be destroyed.

"Right now I'm just trying to stay in business," said Hogue. "I'll have to buy my fish elsewhere but the 40 to 50 commercial fishermen in this area can't operate. I'm not happy with the situation but what is a little guy going to do but look for help. Personally, I think the water should be cleaned up but that can't be done at our level. Somebody is going to have to put some pressure on."

Hogue said the PCB contamination probably was from the Twin Cities area. "What else is above Lake Pepin?", he asked.

Roberts said that additional sample tests are being made. "If we're convinced that all the carp are contaminated, the fish will be seized."

He said the presence of PCB's in Lake Pepin had been known for some time but the use of the industrial chemical has declined in recent years.

//

MONS 030950