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Making the best of a bad situation

There seems to be universal agreement right now about the dangers posed by an infamous group of chemical compounds known as PCBs or polychlorinated biphenyls.

They are known to be toxic to man as witnessed by the 1968 deaths of five people in Japan and the poisoning of hundreds of others who had used cooking oil contaminated with the chemical.

Closer to home at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, it has been shown that PCBs cause severe health problems in monkeys fed five parts per million PCBs, a level now considered safe for human consumption by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

PCBs in fish

What has made these case studies more alarming is the recent discovery that PCB levels are increasing in fish caught in Lake Michigan and the Upper Mississippi River.

Fish like the large lake trout and salmon have been shown to be quick to pick up PCBs through their gills, fins and skin and to be very slow in eliminating them. Presently, fish containing up to 50 ppm PCBs are being recovered from the lake.

As a result, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture has curtailed the commercial sale of these fish and the state Department of Natural Resources has warned sportsmen to limit their intake of such fish to one meal per week.

Make catch safe

Beyond that, there are a number of other things the sportsman can do to make his

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