KALAMAZOO GAZETTE
KALAMAZOO, MICH.
(eS) 52,000

JUN 20 1975

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PCB Ban Sought By Commission

Michigan's Natural Resources Commission wants to ban polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's).

The commission recently adopted a policy statement asking the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a nationwide ban on the import, manufacture, and use of PCB's.

Some health experts have warned sport fishermen to be careful in how much Lake Michigan fish they eat because some lake fishes, particularly lake trout, contain high amounts of PCB. Species like lakers and salmon contain PCB levels in excess of the current Food and Drug Administration action guideline of five parts per million.

"Our experience with persistent contaminants like DDT and mercury indicate that once new inputs are stopped, the levels in the environment decline," the Commission's statement said.

The commission said that PCB's are contained in a wide variety of products and utilized in many industrial processes, making environmental protection through traditional effluent standards virtually impossible.

The total impact of PCB's on natural resources is unknown now, the commission said.

However, the contaminants apparently do interfere with production of eggs from Lake Michigan fishes, tests have shown.

MONS 031240