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Japan Vs. Cancer

Now that the state Department of Environmental Conservation has completed more studies on PCBs in salmon, it looks like the majority of those fish sampled had more than the 5 parts per million Federally-accepted maximum.

Some were just over the 5 ppm mark, others double the mark. We get two stories concerning the toxicity of this material and these fish.

The state Health Department says it is okay to eat it once each week. But the state Commissioner of the DEC says don't eat any of the fish with readings over 5 ppm.

It would certainly make things simpler if these agencies got together. It's very confusing to the layman who isn't a scientist and doesn't know what to think.

Whether or not each of us eats the fish is our own decision. But the state has a clear responsibility to make sure that those who are polluting the waters with toxic PCBs be stopped.

PCBs are long-lived. They last about 20 years. And they accumulate in living organisms. If they accumulate to high concentrations, they can do dammage.

If PCB pollution is stopped now, in 10 years there will probably be no doubt about the safety of the fish we catch and eat.

But if this pollution remains unchecked, and the concentrations of PCBs get higher, there may not be any dispute over the toxicity of the fish.

The DEC must act to the fullest extent of the law to protect our waters, our fish and our health in this matter.

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