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Dealer Buries Carp Containing Chemical

PEPIN, Wis. (AP) — A Pepin fish wholesaler has buried another 40,000 pounds of carp — mostly caught in Lake Pepin — containing a potentially cancer-causing industrial chemical.

The carp contained levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) higher than the 5 parts per million (ppm) maximum allowed under U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations.

The carp buried Monday contained as much as 25 ppm of the chemical, which has been found to cause cancer in laboratory animals.

Wholesaler Rudolph Hogue had buried 20,000 pounds of carp last week containing 6 to 14 ppm of PCB.

All the fish were caught before the high PCB levels were discovered, since the discovery, fishing on Lake Pepin, a widening of the Mississippi River between Rew Wing and Wabasha, Minn., has been at a virtual standstill.

Carp is the main commercial fish taken from Lake Pepin.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and FDA were attempting to determine the source of the pollution.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and FDA plan to meet next week to coordinate testing in the lake.

The PCB probably originated from industrial operations in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, about 70 miles upriver from Lake Pepin, officials said.

A DNR official said use of the chemical has declined drastically since warnings were issued in 1972, but noted that it takes five years for the chemical to begin breaking down.

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