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Beware of eating catfish, study shows

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Warning: eating Ohio River catfish may be hazardous to your health.

That's the conclusion scientists are drawing from an analysis of fish collected two months ago at 11 points along the river.

Researchers for the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) collected the fish and sent them to federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) labs in Cincinnati.

What the FDA found in the catfish were concentrations of PCBs—chemical linked to cancer—that were higher than federal standards permissible.

The PCB concentrations were highest at sampling points in Louisville and at Maidahl Dam in Campbell County.

Catfish taken at Maidahl had 16.6 parts per million of PCBs. The FDA has set five parts per million as the highest permissible level.

"The results (of the sample) are alarming," said Jessica Barron, public information officer for ORSANCO, Cincinnati.

ORSANCO, however, has no authority to ban catfishing in the river. That's up to the states, Barron said.

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