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# They Left Out The Good Part

Chemical contamination of fish will be a major problem in the years immediately ahead. There is mounting evidence of high levels of PCB's (poly-chlorinated biphenyls) in fish, not only from the Great Lakes, but fresh and salt waters virtually everywhere. PCB's are only one of several chemicals found in fish today that "build-up" and could be "dangerous" for humans who eat these fish.

One point that has not been made in publicity on chemical contamination (or at least, not clearly enough) is that **there is no evidence to indicate average consumption, by American standards, of fish is harmful.** We eat considerably less fish on a per person basis, than the Japanese, and in fact less than most people in other countries. Average American consumption, including that of American fishermen, is about one meal a week. True, some eat more, but that's about the average.

Nobody seems to know for sure how much fish can be safely eaten or what levels of various chemicals in fish are too high or "dangerous". Most foods that Americans eat have more chemicals, many at higher levels, than 10 years ago—even five years ago.

Americans do a lot of things every day that they know are not good for their health, like smoking, excessive drinking, use of certain drugs, consumption of a wide variety of foods that have known quantities of chemicals and substances which have been proven to be harmful to health.

With fish, the picture is still very unclear. More specific research is needed and it will probably be forthcoming. Many factors will be considered in determining the dangers, if any, to humans in eating fish – not only the levels of chemicals but the amounts of fish that are eaten, what kinds of fish, where they were caught, how they are prepared or cooked – and the relationships between these, among other things.

At this writing, the general consensus from available information and from experts who do research on chemical contamination, is that one meal a week of fish caught by American anglers in waters open to sport fishing is "safe". There is no evidence to indicate this rate of consumption is harmful.

Until guilt is proven, we must suppose innocence, as we do with a tremendous variety of other products we eat every day.

Retailers of fisherman products, in constant contact with the growing legions of American anglers, should find out all they can about chemical contamination of game fish in their trading areas because they have a unique responsibility to fishermen. So do the rest of us in the sport fishing industry.

There's a lot more to it than I've been reading in newspapers and hearing on radio and TV lately. We've got to look past the sensationalism and examine the unsensational facts that in this case amount to the good part of the story, for everyone. It's the part that too often has been left out.

## More Good News . . .

Two industrial giants announced late in January that they are taking action to curb pollution.

Monsanto Company announced it plans to phase out the manufacture of PCB's. F. J. Fitzgerald, a corporate vice president, said that "as soon as we are satisfied that the electrical power supply industry's needs for usable, acceptable alternate dilectric fluids have been met, Monsanto will voluntarily shut down its PCB manufacturing unit."

Inland Steel Company has agreed to end its pollution of Lake Michigan by installing a large-scale water recycling program. Company officials estimated that it will cost $90 million to build the court-approved system at its huge Indiana Harbor Works. This action was promoted by a court action taken as part of the result of an eight year legal battle, which is now formally settled.

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