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Byline

Mercury, PCB found in striped bass

Special to the NEWS

SAINT JOHN, N. B. — Dr. Michael Dadswell, researcher with the Huntsman Marine Laboratory, St. Andrews, N.B., says that, along with high levels of mercury he found in striped bass in the St. John River, PCB (polychlorinated biphenyls) has also been found in the species.

Dr. Dadswell said that levels of PCBs are relatively low in the flesh of bass, but that substantially higher levels of 1.8 parts per million are present in the eggs of the fish.

About 96 per cent of the eggs were breaking before hatching and he said this was probably due to the combination of DDT residues left from the time when that spray was used against the spruce budworm.

PCB, he said, is extremely persistent, highly toxic and can come from anything from cardboard to machinery.

New Brunswick Environment Minister Fernand Dube said an investigation will get under way as soon as possible.