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PCB. Toxicology

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PCB's weaken trout spines

Exposure to low levels of polychlorinated biphenyls—down to 0.43 ppb—weakens the backbones of trout, according to Dr. Paul M. Mehrly and coworkers at the National Fish Research Laboratory, Columbia, Mo. (Pesticide Chemistry). The backbones of the affected fish contained an excess of calcium but were deficient in collagen and phosphorus. The fish also were deficient in vitamin C, a cofactor in collagen synthesis. The scientists speculate that the trout use so much vitamin C to detoxify PCB that not enough remains for skeletal development.

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