



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
LANSING

RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

OLGA DAZZO  
DIRECTOR

May 24, 2012

Dear 10 Mile/Lange/Revere Canal Homeowner:

On May 24, 2011 and August 5, 2011, the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) sent you a letter regarding the “do not eat” fish advisory for all fish in the Lange/Revere canals and for carp and catfish in Lake St. Clair. The advisory is based on unsafe levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the canal fish. This follow-up letter is to remind you that the advisory is still in place and to inform you about additional outreach MDCH is conducting.

*Fish Advisories*

Carp, largemouth bass, black crappie, and pumpkinseed were sampled from the Lange/Revere canals in 2010. Those were the only species seen, even though other fish, such as perch, are often in the canal. Usually, when MDCH issues a fish advisory, we assume that people are eating a small amount of contamination over a long time. The concentrations of PCBs in the fish sampled from the Lange/Revere canals are enough to give you 34 years’ worth of PCBs in one meal. Therefore, we **strongly** advise that people **do not eat any** fish from the Lange/Revere canals.

PCBs in the body tend to be found in the fat. Carp and catfish have a lot of fat. PCBs in the environment tend to be found in soil and sediment, rather than in water. Fish that feed on the bottom, like carp and catfish, are more likely to take up PCBs than fish feeding in the water column. Therefore, MDCH issued a precautionary “do not eat” advisory for carp and catfish in Lake St. Clair until more information is available.

The current Lake St. Clair fish consumption advice for other species is listed in the Michigan “Eat Safe Fish” Guide ([www.michigan.gov/eatsafefish](http://www.michigan.gov/eatsafefish)). This advice is based on fish data from the Anchor Bay area, north of and “upstream” from the Lange/Revere canals.

MDCH has additional fish advisory signs like those posted behind West Marine and on the railings of the Lange Street bridge. We are looking for more locations along the Lange/Revere canals to post the signs so they are clearly visible to the public, whether persons approach the canals from Jefferson or from Lake St. Clair. If you would like to have a sign posted on your property, please contact Christina Bush at 517-335-9717 or [bushc6@michigan.gov](mailto:bushc6@michigan.gov).

*Additional Fish Tissue Analysis*

In 2011, the state sampled fish from Lake St. Clair closer to the Lange/Revere canals, going up to five miles north and four miles south of the canals. The sampling occurred near the shore, by electroshocking, not by netting or hook-and-line. The species caught were: carp, bullhead, channel catfish, walleye, yellow perch, smallmouth bass, bluegill, and pumpkinseed. A subset of the fish were analyzed, to determine trends, but more analysis of the 2011 fish needs to take

place, and additional fish sampled and tested, before conclusions can be made and the Lake St. Clair fish advisory adjusted, if necessary. Plans are being made for this additional work.

Currently, there are no plans for the state to sample fish from the Lange/Revere canals this year. PCB concentrations in fish usually decline gradually over a period of years after the source of the PCBs is removed. As the PCB investigation progresses, MDCH will determine when the next sampling should occur. Therefore, please continue to follow the “**do not eat**” advice for fish caught in the Lange/Revere canals until further notice.

#### *Canal Use (Swimming and Irrigating)*

MDCH and the Macomb County Health Department provided a factsheet about preventing exposure to the PCBs in the Lange/Revere canals. The factsheet is online at [www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxics](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxics), under “Health Assessments and Related Documents,” at the *St. Clair Shores, Macomb County* link. People should not swim in the canals until the PCB source is found and cleaned up. Homeowners should not use canal water for irrigating, since the pump may take up contaminated sediment and deposit it on your lawn or garden.

#### *Outreach and Education*

MDCH has discussed additional outreach options with St. Clair Shores city officials, so that people are well informed about the PCBs in the Lange/Revere canals and fish. The following are some of activities that have taken place or are being planned:

- MDCH provided a factsheet for students of local schools and their families regarding the “do not eat” advisory for fish caught in the Lange/Revere canals. This information went to public schools in 2011 and to both public and parochial schools in 2012.
- MDCH has provided the “Eat Safe Fish in St. Clair Shores” brochure to city and county offices, local fishing and marine shops, and on-line. MDCH also has handed out the brochure at public meetings regarding the Ten Mile Drain Superfund Site.
- The “Inside St. Clair Shores” city newsletter carries fish advisory and other information provided by MDCH.
- The 2012 DNR Fishing Guide referred specifically to the Lange/Revere canals (see [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr), under “Fishing” in the left margin; refer to page 18 in the *Fishing Guide*). MDCH felt that interested anglers needed more information and developed a factsheet that links to that reference.
- MDCH will hold a community meeting this summer to discuss the status of the fish advisory.

The letters, factsheets, and reports that MDCH has developed for the Lange/Revere canals and other matters related to the Ten Mile Drain Superfund Site can be found online at [www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxics](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxics), under “Health Assessments and Related Documents,” at the *St. Clair Shores, Macomb County* link.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the PCB contamination in your community, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



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MDEQ – Water Resources Division  
Macomb County Health Department  
City of St. Clair Shores  
Macomb County Public Works Office