



# Is your fish

INVESTIGATIONS

# TOXIC?

Toxic pollution is impacting one of our region's greatest food resources. This is a major problem for people who rely on local fish as a healthy food source. Fish advisories are not the answer. People have the right to eat fish from the Columbia without the fear of getting sick.

Our formula: Personal stories + laboratory analysis + smart advocacy = less pollution



## What's in our fish?

In fish bound for the dinner table, we found:

- PCBs 27,000% above EPA safe levels
- Mercury 300% above EPA safe levels
- Heavy metals such as chromium and lead
- Endocrine disrupting toxic flame retardants

### The Problem:

#### Toxics in the Columbia River

- ▶ Heavy metals: mercury from factories and coal burning;
- ▶ PCBs from stormwater runoff, municipal discharge, and dirty industrial sites;
- ▶ Emerging Pollutants: flame retardants (PBDEs), pharmaceuticals, and endocrine disrupting chemicals

### Solutions:

- ▶ Enforce laws that protect clean water
- ▶ Reduce industrial pollution
- ▶ Use non-toxic products
- ▶ Support organizations that protect our rivers and our fish



These toxic chemicals can increase cancer risk and harm immune, reproductive, endocrine, and nervous systems in humans and aquatic life.



# Meet the Fishermen



**NAME:** Giorgi

**FACT:** 68-year-old Russian-speaking immigrant from Krygyzstan, catches and eats carp twice a week

**FISH:** Carp, Vancouver Lake

**IN HIS FISH:**

- PCBs 30 times safe levels
- Mercury 3.5 times safe levels
- Toxic flame retardants
- Heavy metals (Cadmium, Copper, Chromium, and Lead)

**NAME:** Greg

**FACT:** Loves fishing for his dinner

**FISH:** Bass, Columbia Gorge

**IN HIS FISH:**

- Arsenic 120 times safe levels
- Mercury 4 times safe levels
- Heavy metals



**NAME:** Daniel

**FACT:** Grew up in Romania and fishing for carp, catfish, and perch

**FISH:** Sucker, Columbia Slough

**IN HIS FISH:**

- PCBs 270 times safe levels
- Arsenic 100 times safe levels
- Mercury 2.5 times safe levels
- Toxic flame retardants

"Fish advisories are sometimes posted in the Columbia Slough, but people do not heed the signs," says Daniel.

**NAME:** Bob

**FACT:** Fishing Guide in Astoria, OR.

**FISH:** Sturgeon, Columbia River estuary

**IN HIS FISH:**

- PCBs 74 times safe levels
- Arsenic 270 times safe levels
- Mercury 2 times safe levels
- Heavy metals (Selenium, Barium, Chromium, and Copper)



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