

# Dept. of Natural Resources: Fox River And Bay of Green Bay fish die off reported; seeking help from public

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**MADISON, Wis.** – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced that a large-scale fish die-off has been reported in the Fox River and lower Green Bay waters.

Reports of dead fish began June 18 and DNR staff initiated monitoring efforts on June 20. At this time, the water quality samples collected have been normal and the reason for the die-off is unknown. It appears that the species impacted consist mostly of channel catfish, carp and sheepshead.

The majority of dead fish have been found downstream of the De Pere Dam and into the Bay of Green Bay, but some fish have been reported as far north as southern Door County and upstream on the Fox River to Wrightstown Dam. It's unknown where the fish originated from and is possible that strong currents and wind are pushing the fish north into Green Bay.

DNR staff continue to monitor water quality and investigate the cause of the die-off. One freshly deceased catfish was collected on Sunday, June 26, and is being tested by the DNR's Fish Health Veterinarians. However, limited information may be gained since it was the only sample submitted. The DNR will continue to monitor for other suitable samples and submit them for testing as they become available.

“Many of the dead fish we've recovered have, unfortunately, been too decomposed for testing. We need to conduct necessary disease testing to try and understand

why this is happening. It's important that anyone who finds either dying or freshly dead fish contact us immediately," said David Boyarski, DNR Northeast District Fisheries Supervisor.

The DNR is asking the public for help with the monitoring efforts.

**What to look for:**

- Dying fish – fish that cannot maintain their balance or are floating on the surface but still gilling
- Freshly dead fish – dead fish with pink gills

**Only dying or freshly dead fish need to be reported at this time.  
The DNR asks that you do NOT handle dead or diseased fish.**

Please report any dying or freshly dead fish  
with an exact location or GPS location to:  
Jason Breeggemann, DNR Green Bay Area Fisheries Biologist  
Email: [jason.breeggemann@wisconsin.gov](mailto:jason.breeggemann@wisconsin.gov)  
Phone: (920) 662-5480

The DNR recommends that those recreating in the Fox River and Bay of Green Bay do not to handle any dead or dying fish. Humans and their pets should never consume dead or visibly sick fish. The DNR urges anglers to thoroughly cook their catch and follow the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration's food safety guidelines](#).

If shoreline owners need to remove dead fish from their property, they can dispose of them through a [licensed landfill](#) and should wear protective gloves while handling dead fish.