

>

---

August 18, 2014 9:14AM

Print Page

## From Toledo to the Gulf, water pollution threats increasing

---

New Orleans, LA -- Aug 04, 2014 / (<http://www.myprgenie.com>) -- USA, August 4, 2014—Just two days after hundreds of thousands of Toledo residents were advised not to bathe in or drink their own tap water, today scientists from the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium released their annual measurement of the Gulf of Mexico's Dead Zone, and the results are grim.

New Orleans, LA -- Aug 04, 2014 / (<http://www.myprgenie.com>) -- USA, August 4, 2014—Just two days after hundreds of thousands of Toledo residents were advised not to bathe in or drink their own tap water, today scientists from the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium released their annual measurement of the Gulf of Mexico's Dead Zone, and the results are grim.

The Dead Zone, named for the result of oxygen deprivation on the Gulf's aquatic life, has been estimated at 5,008 square miles this year. That measurement equals an area roughly the size of Connecticut and is three times larger than the 2015 goal established by a task force specifically created to address the problem and comprised of Mississippi River state representatives and federal agencies.

The issue affecting lake water in Toledo and ocean water off the coast of Louisiana is the same: nitrogen and phosphorus pollution from agricultural fertilizer runoff and discharges from waste water treatment plants and industrial sources with no limits or weak limits on these pollutants. The excess nitrogen and phosphorus causes fish kills, death to livestock and pets, and damage to drinking water supplies.

“Currently we are seeing the impacts of nitrogen and phosphorous pollution, not only off the Louisiana coast, but throughout the country,” said Matt Rota, Senior Policy Director of the Gulf Restoration Network, a member organization in the Mississippi River Collaborative, a group of environmental organizations working on pollution solutions for the Mississippi River.

In lakes and rivers, nitrogen and phosphorus pollution causes rapid algae growth which dies off and decomposes, depriving the water of oxygen needed to support freshwater and marine life and creating dangerous toxins like microcystin, the primary reason the Toledo drinking water was deemed unsafe.

Despite voluntary initiatives to address the Dead Zone encouraged by the EPA and several state regulatory agencies, nitrogen and phosphorus pollution continues to be a major problem. This lack of regulation forced members of the Mississippi River Collaborative to petition EPA for action in 2008 and ultimately file suit against EPA in 2012. Specifically, this lawsuit was filed due to EPA's refusal to set numeric standards for nitrogen and phosphorus pollution or ensure that states did so themselves in a timely manner.

# # #

The Mississippi River Collaborative is a partnership of environmental organizations and legal centers from states bordering the Mississippi River as well as regional and national groups working on issues affecting the Mississippi River and its tributaries. [www.msrivercollab.org](http://www.msrivercollab.org).

---

<http://www.aledotimesrecord.com/article/20140818/News/140819499>

Print Page