Mercury in Fish

National Atmospheric Deposition Program
Where Does Mercury Come From?

**Natural Sources:**
- Soils and rocks
- Wildfires

**Man-Made Sources:**
- Burning coal and medical waste
- Manufacturing chemicals
1. Rain and snow wash mercury out of the environment and into oceans, lakes, and rivers
2. In water, mercury becomes its toxic form, methyl mercury
3. Fish species eat methyl mercury when they eat other fish
Top of the Aquatic Food Chain

Large, long-living predator fish

- Shark
- King mackerel
- Northern pike
- Walleye
- Swordfish
- Largemouth bass
- Lake trout
Damage to:

• Heart
• Kidneys
• Central Nervous System
Nearly all fish contain some amount of methyl mercury.

Young children should follow government rules on eating fish.
MDN samples mercury in rain and snow to help researchers determine trends on mercury deposition: where it is deposited, at which rate, and at what concentration.
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