



What's new with . . .

TOXICS REDUCTION

IN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION IN 1999

The Chesapeake Bay Program's toxics goal is "... a Chesapeake Bay free of toxics by reducing or eliminating the input of chemical contaminants from all controllable sources to levels that result in no toxic or bioaccumulative impact on the living resources that inhabit the Bay or on human health." The Bay Program continues to take steps toward controlling and reducing inputs of chemical contaminants to the system and toward better defining toxic conditions in the Bay.

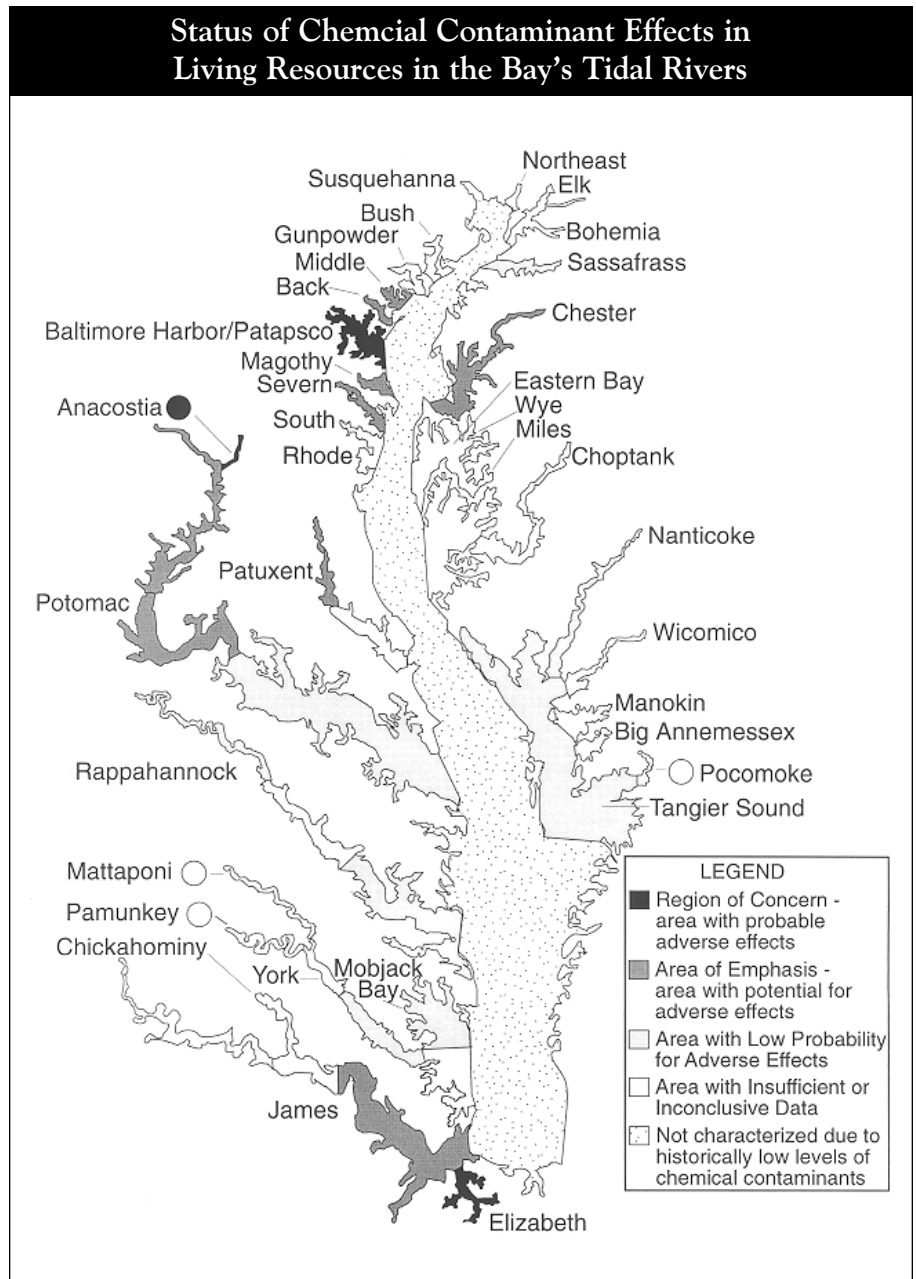
What's The Problem?

The nature, extent and severity of toxic impacts vary widely throughout the Chesapeake system. A few areas called hotspots or Regions of Concern have serious localized problems, and some other regions, previously thought to be free of toxics, have shown some toxic effects. Overall, however, there is no evidence of severe, system wide toxics problems.

Toxics Characterization Report Released

In 1999, the Bay Program released *Targeting Toxics: A Characterization Report—A Tool for Directing Management and Monitoring Actions in the Chesapeake Bay's Tidal Rivers*. This toxics characterization is the most comprehensive assessment to date of the status of chemical contaminant effects on living resources—its fish, shellfish and other creatures—in the tidal rivers of the Bay. The information in the report will help Bay Program decision makers target specific tidal rivers for management and monitoring. Further updates to the characterization will occur as data are collected. For a copy of the report, go to www.chesapeakebay.net or call 1-800-YOUR BAY.

Status of Chemical Contaminant Effects in Living Resources in the Bay's Tidal Rivers



Top Findings:

- *No new Regions of Concern.* Three areas were designated in 1993 and still remain. They are the Elizabeth River in Virginia, the Baltimore Harbor/Patapsco River in Maryland, and the Anacostia River in the District of Columbia. These are areas where there are proven toxics effects in living resources.
- *8 Areas with Low Probability for Adverse Effects.* These are areas where living resources are unlikely to be affected by chemical contamination.
- *10 Areas of Emphasis.* These are areas where living resources may be affected by chemical contamination.
- *20 Areas with Insufficient or Inconclusive Data.* Data were inconclusive or insufficient to characterize a region into any of the above categories. These regions will be given high priority for future characterizations and will challenge researchers and managers to determine their status.

The characterization effort was designed to identify areas where chemical contaminant effects to the Bay's living resources occur or have the potential to occur. Human health impacts from contaminated air, soil or water were not addressed. Because potential human health issues are important, state agencies have already looked at human health issues in the tidal rivers of the Bay. Where human health concerns already have been identified, appropriate fish consumption advisories or other warnings have been issued. The results of the report should not alter the current recreational or commercial uses of any of the rivers.

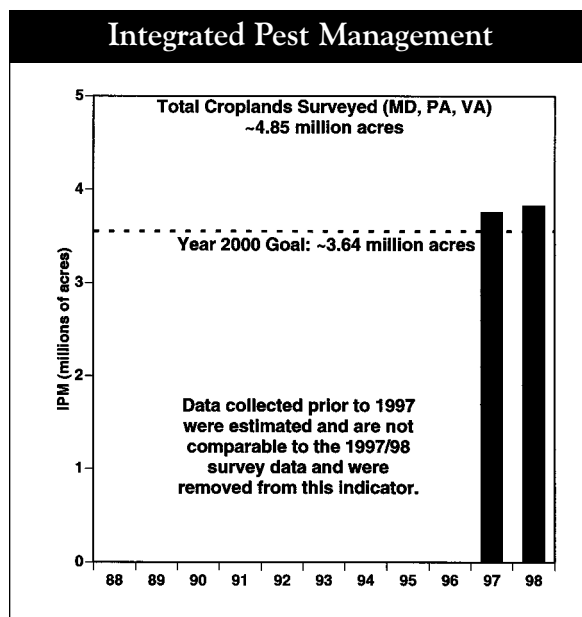
Loading and Release Inventory Released

Also released this year, the 1999 Chesapeake Bay Basinwide Toxics Loading and Release Inventory (TLRI) reports the chemical contaminant loadings to the Bay and its major tributaries. This inventory represents the most comprehensive accounting of loadings from point sources from urban runoff, atmospheric deposition, shipping and boating, acid mine drainage and upstream sources. The loadings inventory, coupled with the toxics characterization, will enable managers, scientists and stakeholders to target toxics reduction and prevention activities toward specific sources and chemicals in impacted areas of the Bay. Major findings from the TLRI include:

- Upstream point and nonpoint sources provide substantial loads of metals to the Bay and tidal rivers.
- Urban runoff below the fall line is a substantial source of select organic contaminants (PAHs) to the Bay and tidal rivers.

OF NOTE:

► **Bay Program Meets IPM Goal:** Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, is a pollution prevention technique that can help the agriculture industry and other pesticide users to reduce their reliance on potentially harmful chemicals. According to a recent agronomic crop survey, the current Bay Program goal that calls for 75% of agricultural land within the basin to be under IPM by 2000 has been met. The survey reported IPM was practiced on nearly 3.9 million acres or 79% of the surveyed acreage. The goal also calls for IPM on 75% of recreational and public lands, 50% of commercial land, and 25% of residential land. Based on IPM requirements on recreational and public lands, this goal also has been met. Bay Program partners now are concentrating on meeting the IPM goal on residential and commercial lands.



► **Reevaluation and Revision Under Way:** The Bay Program is reevaluating and revising the 1994 Toxics Strategy. The process, called the Toxics Reevaluation and Revision, will lead to the drafting of a new basinwide toxics strategy for the Chesapeake Executive Council's endorsement in 2000. So far, input from more than 250 stakeholders from all levels of government; environmental and public interest groups; research institutions; and industries have been included in the Reevaluation and Revision.