



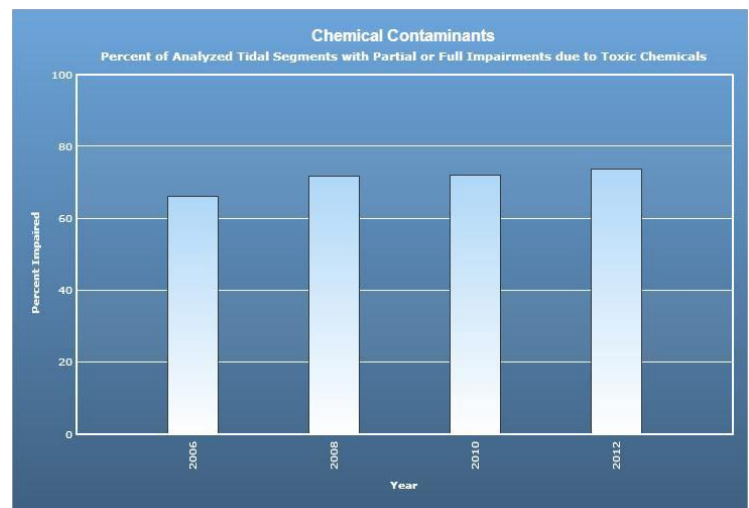
*Continually improve practices and controls that reduce and prevent the effects of toxic contaminants below levels that harm aquatic systems and humans. Build from existing programs to reduce the amount and effects of PCBs in the Bay and watershed. Use research findings to evaluate the implementation of additional policies, programs and practices for other contaminants that need to be further reduced or eliminated.*

**Why is this outcome important?**

The toxic contaminants that are widely distributed in the Chesapeake Bay watershed harm the health of fish and wildlife and present risks to human health that limit the amount of fish that people can consume. The presence and potential risk of some of these contaminants are well understood, but current efforts to reduce their impacts are producing limited results. The Chesapeake Bay Program, therefore, is recommitting itself to coordinating among federal agencies and watershed jurisdictions to find ways to improve the practices and controls intended to reduce the input of certain contaminants.

**Current Conditions:**

In 2012, close to 74 percent of the tidal water segments of the Chesapeake Bay were either fully or partially impaired due to toxic contaminants, up from 66 percent in 2006.



See how chemical contaminants are doing at [chesapeakebay.net](http://chesapeakebay.net)

Contaminants like polychlorinated biphenyls (or PCBs) are responsible for extensive impacts in the Bay watershed. Because PCBs accumulate in fish tissue, jurisdictions have issued recommendations for limiting the consumption of fish from the Bay and its watershed.

**How was the outcome derived? Who came up with it?**

An *ad hoc* group of representatives from federal agencies and watershed jurisdictions considered the highest-priority pollutant to focus on first (PCBs) and committed to reducing other contaminants in the future as further priorities are identified.

**What was the basis or baseline?**

The basis for the outcome was the extent of identified impairments, or those areas where pollutants are affecting the ability of the Bay to act as an ecological resource due to toxic contamination. The states have set minimum water quality goals and in many cases they are not met due to PCB contamination.

**For More:**

- [http://www.chesapeakebay.net/issues/issue/chemical\\_contaminants](http://www.chesapeakebay.net/issues/issue/chemical_contaminants)
- [http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/ChesBayToxics\\_finaldraft\\_11513b.pdf](http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/ChesBayToxics_finaldraft_11513b.pdf)
- <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/hazard/tsd/pcbs/index.htm>