

The Township has received several reports of a significant fish kill on Belleville Lake. At this time, it appears to be a result of the high water temperatures and low dissolved oxygen. There is not any evidence of a toxic release or spill. The Township has contacted the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE) and asked them to investigate to rule out other potential causes.



Mid-summer is a very hard time for fish. Water near the surface of the lake is too warm for them, while the water near the bottom has too little oxygen. Conditions may become especially serious during a spate of hot, calm weather, resulting in the loss of many fish.

When many fish in an aquatic system die at one time, it is commonly referred to as a **fish kill**. Fish kills are unpleasant to look at and they can change the composition of a fish population. Ordinarily people see few, if any dead fish because scavengers eat them or they sink to the bottom of the lake or pond. It is easier to notice fish that have died from a fish kill because many fish die at one time.

It is not uncommon to see several hundred or even several thousand fish on the shores of a large lake. Gizzard shad are often seen in rivers, Alewives are commonly seen in the Great Lakes. Toxins are usually the first to be blamed when a fish kill occurs. When in reality, toxins are responsible for a very small number of fish kills.

Fish kills can occur naturally in response to stresses that fish face throughout their life cycle (e.g. spawning). These kills can also occur due to low dissolved oxygen levels in the system. Shallow lakes with very high nutrient levels (eutrophic) are sometimes prone to fish kills that are caused by low oxygen levels.