

SEARCH  
DETNEWS.COM

GO

Pick a Hot Company!

Thursday, May 24, 2001

[Return to Metro](#)

The Detroit News

[E-mail this story](#)[Comment on this story](#)[Previous story](#) [Next story](#)

## SITE INDEX

[Homepage](#)  
[Search](#)  
[CyberSurveys](#)  
[News Talk](#)  
[Sports Talk](#)  
[Lions Talk](#)  
[Tiger Talk](#)  
[Wings Talk](#)  
[Car Talk](#)  
[Tech Talk](#)  
[Horoscope](#)  
[Hot Sites](#)  
[Lottery](#)  
[Weather](#)  
[Staff](#)

## NEWS

[Autos](#)  
[Joyrides](#)  
[Business](#)  
[Careers](#)  
[Census](#)  
[Columnists](#)  
[Commuting](#)  
[Detroit History](#)  
[Editorials](#)  
[Health](#)  
[Metro / State](#)  
[Livingston](#)  
[Macomb](#)  
[Oakland](#)  
[Wayne](#)  
[On Detroit](#)  
[Nation / World](#)  
[Obituaries](#)  
[Death Notices](#)  
[Politics / Govt.](#)  
[Real Estate](#)  
[Religion](#)  
[Schools](#)  
[Special Reports](#)  
[Technology](#)

## SPORTS

[Sports Home](#)  
[Lions/NFL](#)  
[Pistons/NBA](#)  
[Red Wings/NHL](#)  
[Shock/WNBA](#)  
[Tigers/Baseball](#)  
[MSU](#)  
[U-M](#)  
[More Colleges](#)  
[Golf Guide](#)  
[High Schools](#)  
[Motor Sports](#)  
[More Sports](#)  
[Scoreboards](#)

## ENTERTAINMENT

[Entertainment](#)

## Report: Records show Michigan companies, cities pollute water

DETROIT -- One-third of Michigan's largest companies and city sewer plants recently violated their Clean Water Act discharge permits -- many by polluting lakes, rivers and streams, according to a report released Thursday.

From Petoskey and Albion to Lansing and Grand Rapids, 62 of 181 industrial and municipal facilities that hold federal permits to discharge pollutants into water bodies violated those permits at least once between 1998 and 1999, according to the Public Interest Research Group in Michigan. The group said it obtained the data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"There's no question in Michigan that people love the Great Lakes and love the water. And yet, Great Lakes and all our water ways are being mistreated," said Megan Owens of PIRGIM.

But Ken Silfven, spokesman for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, said he questions the validity of the group's findings. Silfven said the state agency was not notified of the report.

"If they really had valid information here, you'd think they'd share it with us," Silfven said. "We honestly have not seen it yet."

Of the violations, 42 were for facilities that exceeded the allowable limit of pollutants discharged into water bodies, Owens said. The other violations were for failure to report discharge amounts to the government within allowed time periods.

Owens said the federal and state environmental agencies aren't doing enough to ensure that companies and government facilities follow the provisions of their permits. Silfven denied that as well, saying that if there is a significant violation, DEQ is "on top of it."

The report analyzed data between October 1998 and December 1999, Owens said.

Among its key findings:

-- 41 of the 62 violations were recorded at sewer treatment plants, including facilities in Detroit, Flint, Pontiac, East Lansing and Grand Rapids.

-- 41 percent of Michigan's municipal sewer facilities were in violation of Clean Water Act permits.

-- 10 Michigan sewer facilities were in significant noncompliance for all

### On the Net:

Public Interest Research Group in Michigan:

<http://www.pirgim.org/>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

<http://www.epa.gov/>

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality:

<http://www.deq.state.mi.us/>

- ▶ [Casino Guide](#)
- ▶ [Movie Finder](#)
- ▶ [TV Listings](#)
- [Crossword](#)

**HOMESTYLE**

- [Homestyle home](#)
- ▶ [Decorating](#)
- ▶ [Food](#)
- ▶ [Gardening](#)
- ▶ [Home Improvement](#)
- ▶ [Home Life](#)
- ▶ [Home Tech](#)
- ▶ [Wine Report](#)

**PHOTOS**

- [Sports](#)
- [Red Wings](#)
- [Autos](#)
- [Joyrides](#)
- [News](#)
- [History](#)

five quarters during the study period, including Detroit, St. Clair and Bay City.

Silfven said Michigan's water quality continues to improve, in large part due to state enforcement of environmental laws. He said the state has settled 272 cases since 1991, collecting \$48 million in fines and penalties.

Nearly 70 of the cases have been settled in the last 15 months, he said.

"To imply we're not out there doing the job is not true," Silfven said. "In fact, I think we're doing more enforcement now than ever before. And we'll stand by the results."

[▶ Comment on this story](#)

[▶ Previous story](#) [▶ Back to index](#) [▶ Next story](#)

Copyright 2001  
The Detroit News.

Use of this site  
signifies your  
agreement to the  
[Terms of Service](#)  
(updated April 17,  
2000).