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U-M dioxin researchers to discuss results at community meeting

ANN ARBOR, Mich.--- University of Michigan researchers studying human exposure to dioxins in the Midland-Saginaw area will discuss results of their study at a community meeting Aug. 15 at Saginaw Valley State University.

The purpose of the study was to find out if people living near the Dow Chemical plant in Midland had higher levels of dioxins in their bodies than people living elsewhere in Michigan, and, if so, how the dioxins were entering their bodies. Dioxins are toxic chemicals.

Researchers studied residents of the Tittabawassee River floodplain, an area known to be contaminated by emissions from Dow and other sources. They also studied nearby areas of Midland and Saginaw counties. For comparison, they studied residents of Jackson and Calhoun counties, more than 100 miles away from Dow.

During the two-year study, U-M researchers studied levels of dioxins in people's property soil, household dust and blood samples. They also interviewed residents about their age, body mass, dietary habits, land use, occupation and other personal details. The U-M study was funded by a grant from Dow and was controlled and conducted entirely by U-M researchers. Results will be published.

Dr. David Garabrant, who heads the U-M research team, will present the results of the study to the community meeting. Garabrant is professor of occupational medicine, professor of epidemiology, and associate professor of emergency medicine.

Printed copies of the study's findings will be made available at the meeting. Results will also be available online earlier in the day on the study's website, www.umdioxin.org.

The Aug. 15 meeting begins at 6 p.m. in the Conference and Events Center, Curtiss Hall, Saginaw Valley State University, 7400 Bay Road, Saginaw. It is open to the public.