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For more information, please contact:

David Garabrant, MD, MPH at (734) 936-0753

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
PREPARES DIOXIN STUDY**

ANN ARBOR – A team of University of Michigan scientists is putting the final touches on preparations for a two-year study, beginning mid-July, to see whether residents of Midland and Saginaw counties have been exposed to dioxin that is in the soil.

“We want to get the facts,” said Dr. David Garabrant, head of the U-M dioxin study. “We want to find out whether dioxin that is in the soil is also in people’s bodies.”

Garabrant noted that this research is not intended to determine what effect dioxin has had on people’s health.

Instead, the purpose is to find out whether the elevated levels of dioxin in the soil in the city of Midland, and in the Tittabawassee River flood plain between Midland and Saginaw, have also caused elevated levels of dioxin in residents’ bodies.

“Once we find out whether the increased dioxin in the soil is also in people's bodies,” Garabrant said, “then a decision can be made whether other studies are needed concerning health effects.”

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Garabrant is a U-M Professor of Environmental Health Sciences and Epidemiology and Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine. He has conducted numerous past researches into the presence of toxic substances in the environment. Garabrant heads a team of more than sixty University of Michigan scientists and surveyors.

They plan to take samples of soil, dust and blood from 350 residents of the Tittabawassee River area and 175 persons living outside the floodplain in Saginaw and Midland counties. They will also take samples from 175 residents of Jackson and Calhoun counties, where there is no known dioxin pollution, for comparison.

The \$10 million University of Michigan study is funded by the Dow Chemical Company but is controlled entirely by the University of Michigan.

“Dioxin is a serious issue. Because it’s so important to get the facts, we’re going to make sure that this study is of the highest integrity and independence,” Garabrant said.

Sampling will continue until late 2006. Results will be published in 2007.

Organizers of the University of Michigan Dioxin Exposure Study are creating a Web site so that members of the public can learn more details of the scientific study and receive updates as the research progresses.

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