

Sioux County fish kill traced to pesticide leachate

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DNR traced Sioux County fish kill to improper disposal of pesticide

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HULL—The report of a fish kill sent DNR staff from Spencer looking for a pollutant source in a small creek on the southeast side of the Sioux County town of Hull.

They found dead fish in a small tributary of the West Branch of the Floyd River. DNR staff traced the problem upstream to Hull Coop Association where an employee rinsed out chemicals Wednesday morning after spraying corn. The rinse water containing fungicide and insecticide ran into a storm sewer, flowed under Highway 18 and entered the creek.

“While the chemical was greatly diluted, even small amounts in the parts per billion can be toxic to fish,” said Ken Hessenius, supervisor of the DNR’s Spencer office.

“With stream levels low and temperatures high, fish and other aquatic organisms are more likely to be stressed. I would urge everyone to be careful so that chemicals and other potential pollutants don’t reach streams,” he said.

DNR fisheries staff estimate about 3,600 fish, mostly minnows, chubs and darters, were killed along 4,200 feet of stream.

The DNR will seek appropriate enforcement action, including fish restitution.