



State of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

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NEWS RELEASE

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Improved Fish Consumption Advisory For Some Lake Erie and Ohio River Species

A few fish species have lower chemical levels and can be consumed more often according to the 2008 fish consumption advisory issued by Ohio EPA, the Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Lake Erie walleye 23 inches and larger used to be under a one-meal-a-month limit in the advisory and can now be eaten once a week. The weekly limit is consistent with a statewide advisory for all fish. Lake Erie channel catfish 16 inches and over also have been upgraded from "do not eat" to a limit of one meal every two months.

The advisory for Ohio River flathead catfish 20 inches and over and smallmouth buffalo 24 inches and over has changed from one meal every two months to one meal per month. Larger sizes of fish species have lived longer, therefore accumulating more chemicals in fish tissue, explaining why some advisories apply only to bigger fish.

Ohio has issued annual fish consumption advisories for 15 years to help Ohio sports fishermen decide how to safely eat their catch. The 2008-2009 Ohio fishing season begins tomorrow.

Several species of fish studied need more stringent advisories for the following water bodies: Dow Lake, East Fork Lake, Lake Erie, Little Miami River, Mahoning River, Muskingum River, Ohio River and West Branch Reservoir. The type and size of fish, sections of water bodies, and chemicals of concern are listed on the attached charts.

A statewide advisory of one meal per week for most fish remains in place due to mercury. Mercury poses the greatest risk for women of child-bearing age, pregnant and nursing mothers and children under 15. Fish contaminated with high levels of mercury have been shown to cause neurological damage and impaired development of young children. More detailed information about fish consumption can be found at Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Centers, local health departments, Ohio Department of Natural Resources district offices or Ohio EPA offices.

Fish consumption advisory contact information will be provided for anglers with their fishing licenses in the Ohio Fishing Regulations booklet beginning on March 1, 2008. For more details on all fish advisories issued in Ohio, consult Ohio EPA's Web site at: <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/fishadvisory/index.html>, or call 1-800-755-4769 or (614) 644-2160.

2008 Fish Consumption Advisory
February 29, 2008
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Ohio EPA partners with the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to develop consumption advisories for fish caught in Ohio. Fish consumption advisories are updated annually based on processed samples collected during the previous fishing season. For the latest advisory, Ohio EPA and ODNR collected 391 samples. The information helps Ohio's fishing community make informed decisions about consuming their catch. To learn more about fish and shellfish purchased outside Ohio, please visit the federal government Web site:

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~frf/sea-mehg.html>.

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<http://www.epa.state.oh.us>

Ohio Fish Consumption Advisory Updates for 2008
Ohio EPA Division of Surface Water. February 29, 2008.
See www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/fishadvisory for more information.

Water Body	One meal per	Species	Contaminant	Reach
Dow Lake	Month	Channel Catfish	Mercury	All Waters (Athens County)
		Largemouth Bass		
East Fork Lake	Month	Largemouth Bass	Mercury	All Waters (Clermont County)
Lake Erie	2 Months	Channel Catfish	PCBs	All Waters (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky Counties)
		Lake Trout		
	Month	Chinook Salmon 19" and over	PCBs	
		Coho Salmon		
		Common Carp		
		Freshwater Drum		
		Smallmouth Bass		
		Steelhead Trout		
		White Bass		
		Whitefish		
White Perch				
Little Miami River	Month	Sauger	Mercury	All Waters (Clark, Clermont, Greene, Hamilton, Warren Counties)
		Silver Redhorse		
Mahoning River	Do Not Eat	Channel Catfish 21" and over	PCBs	Rockhill Avenue NE (Alliance) to Pennsylvania State Line
		Smallmouth Bass 15" and over		
	2 Months	Channel Catfish under 21"	PCBs	
		Common Carp		
Smallmouth Bass				

Water Body	One meal per	Species	Contaminant	Reach
		under 15"		
	Month	Largemouth Bass	Mercury	
	Month	Walleye	PCBs	
Muskingum River	2 Months	Smallmouth Buffalo 24" and over	PCBs	Zanesville Dam (Zanesville) to Ohio River (Morgan, Muskingum, Washington Counties)
	Month	Freshwater Drum	Mercury	
	Month	Flathead Catfish 24" and over	Mercury, PCBs	
			Saugeye	
	Month	Channel Catfish	PCBs	
		Common Carp		
		Smallmouth Buffalo under 24"		
White Bass				
Ohio River	2 Months	Channel Catfish	PCBs	All Waters (Adams, Athens, Belmont, Brown, Clermont, Columbiana, Gallia, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lawrence, Meigs, Monroe, Scioto, Washington Counties)
	Month	Black Crappie	PCBs	
		Common Carp		
		Flathead Catfish		
		Freshwater Drum		
		Sauger		
		Smallmouth Bass		
		Smallmouth Buffalo		
		Striped Bass Hybrid		
		Walleye		
White Bass				
West Branch Reservoir	Month	Largemouth Bass	Mercury	All Waters (Portage County)