



# NEWS

R E L E A S E

Illinois Department of Public Health

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## 2012 Sports Fish Consumption Advisory

**SPRINGFIELD** – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced the 2012 consumption advisories for sport fish caught in Illinois waters. This year, new advisories are being issued for the following lakes and rivers:

- Carbondale City Reservoir, Jackson County
- Greenville Old City Lake (Patriot’s Park Lake), Bond County
- Henderson Creek (below the junction with Cedar Creek), Warren County
- Lake of the Woods, Champaign County
- Pyramid State Park, Perry County
- Siloam Springs Lake, Adams County
- Vermilion River, Champaign and Vermilion counties.

Additionally, several less-restrictive advisories have been issued this year.

The Illinois Fish Contaminant Monitoring Program screens fish samples from approximately 40 bodies of water each year for contamination from 14 banned pesticides, industrial chemicals and methylmercury. The program is a joint effort of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and the departments of agriculture, natural resources and public health.

The fish are collected by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and tested by IEPA. IDPH issues an annual consumption advisory based on the IEPA test results. The advisory also can be found on the IDPH website at: [www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/fishadvisory/index.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/fishadvisory/index.htm).

“The advisories are not meant to discourage people from eating fish, but should be used as a guideline to help people decide the types of fish to eat, how often and how to prepare the fish to reduce possible contaminants,” said Illinois Department of Public Health Acting Director Dr. Arthur F. Kohrman. “Fish are a good source of high quality protein and other nutrients and are low in fat. However, contaminants may make some fish unsafe to eat except in limited quantities, particularly for women of childbearing age and young children.”

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While there is no known immediate health hazard from eating contaminated fish from any body of water in Illinois, there are concerns about the effects of long-term, low-level exposure to pesticides and chemicals, such as chlordane, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and methylmercury. Methylmercury has been found to cause reproductive damage and have adverse effects on the central nervous system, including developmental delays.

The advisories are based primarily on protecting sensitive populations, including women of childbearing age, pregnant women, fetuses, nursing mothers and children younger than 15 years of age.

Changes and new 2012 advisories:

- **Carbondale City Reservoir, Jackson County** – methylmercury
  - Largemouth Bass larger than 15 inches – one meal per month for sensitive populations; one meal per week for others
  - Crappie larger than 12 inches – one meal per week for sensitive populations
- **Casey Fork Creek, Jefferson County** - polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
  - All Channel Catfish – one meal per week
- **Cedar Creek, Warren County** - polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
  - All Channel Catfish – one meal per month
- **Evergreen Lake, McLean County** - methylmercury
  - Crappie larger than 10 inches – one meal per week for sensitive populations
- **Greenville Old City Lake (Patriot’s Park Lake), Bond County** – methylmercury
  - All Largemouth Bass – one meal per month for sensitive populations; one meal per week for all others
- **Henderson Creek (below Cedar Creek), Warren County** - polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
  - All common Carp – one meal per month
- **Kickapoo Creek, Peoria County** - polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
  - Common Carp larger than 19 inches – one meal per week
- **Kishwaukee River, Boone, McHenry and Winnebago counties** – methylmercury
  - All Smallmouth Bass – one meal per month for sensitive populations; one meal per week for all others
  - All Rock Bass – one meal per week for sensitive populations
- **Lake Bracken, Knox County** - polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and methylmercury
  - Common Carp smaller than 23 inches – one meal per week
  - Common Carp larger than 23 inches – one meal per month
  - Largemouth Bass smaller than 17 inches – one meal per week
  - Largemouth Bass larger than 17 inches – one meal per month
- **Lake Michigan, Cook and Lake counties** - polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
  - Lake Trout less than 25 inches – one meal per month
  - Lake Trout 25-29 inches – six meals per year
  - Lake Trout larger than 29 inches should not be eaten
- **Lake of the Woods, Champaign County** – polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and methylmercury
  - All common Carp – one meal per month
  - Largemouth Bass larger than 15 inches – one meal per month for sensitive populations; one meal per week for all others

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- **Pyramid State Park, Perry County** – methylmercury
  - All Largemouth Bass – one meal per month for sensitive populations; one meal per week for all others
- **Siloam Springs Lake State Park, Tazewell County** – methylmercury
  - All Largemouth Bass – one meal per month for sensitive populations; one meal per week for all others
- **Skillet Fork Creek, Jefferson, Marion and Wayne counties** – methylmercury
  - Common Carp larger than 21 inches – one meal per month for sensitive populations; one meal per week for all others
- **Vermilion River, Vermilion and Champaign counties** - polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
  - Common Carp larger than 26 inches – one meal per week
  - Channel Catfish larger than 16 inches – one meal per week

The **statewide** mercury advisory cautions sensitive populations to eat no more than one meal per week of predator fish, which pose a greater risk because they feed on other fish and accumulate higher amounts of methylmercury. Predator fish include all species of Black Bass, (Largemouth, Smallmouth and Spotted) Striped Bass, White Bass, Hybrid Striped Bass, Flathead Catfish, Muskellunge, Northern Pike, Saugeye, Sauger and Walleye.

Women beyond childbearing age and males older than 15 years of age may eat unlimited quantities of predator fish, with the exception of the fish caught from the 33 bodies of water that are on the special mercury advisory. These include:

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| • Arrowhead Lake                                 | • Lake Renwick East                        |
| • Big Muddy River and Tributaries                | • Lake Sara                                |
| • Campus Lake                                    | • Little Wabash River and Tributaries      |
| • Carbondale City Reservoir                      | • Mt. Olive New City Lake                  |
| • Cedar Lake                                     | • Marquette Park Lagoon                    |
| • Devil’s Kitchen Lake                           | • Midlothian Reservoir                     |
| • DuPage River (Headwaters to Route 6)           | • Monee Reservoir                          |
| • Evergreen Lake                                 | • Nippersink Creek                         |
| • Greenville Old City Lake (Patriot’s Park Lake) | • Ohio River                               |
| • Heidecke Lake                                  | • Pana Lake                                |
| • Kinkaid Lake                                   | • Pyramid State Park                       |
| • Kishwaukee River                               | • Rock River (Rockford to Milan Steel Dam) |
| • Lake Bracken                                   | • Sam Parr Lake                            |
| • Little Grassy Lake                             | • Siloam Springs Lake                      |
| • Lake in the Hills                              | • Skillet Fork Creek                       |
| • Lake Jacksonville                              | • Wabash River                             |
| • Lake of the Woods                              |  |

For fish that may contain PCBs and chlordane, the advisory provides consumption advice in five categories – unlimited consumption, no more than one meal per week, no more than one meal per month, no more than six meals per year and do not eat.

Anglers who vary the type and source of sport fish consumed – opting for younger, smaller fish, and consuming leaner species such as Walleye and Panfish over fatty species such as the common Carp and Catfish, and who prepare and cook fish in ways that reduce the amount of contaminants – can limit their exposure to harmful substances that may be found in fish.

Several ways to reduce any PCBs and chlordane present in edible portions of fish include:

- Remove the skin from the fillet and cut away any fatty tissue from the belly and dorsal areas before cooking.
- Broil, bake or grill in a way that allows fat to drip away.
- Discard fat drippings or broth from broiled or poached fish. Do not use in other dishes.

These precautions will not reduce the amount of methylmercury in fish. Mercury is found throughout a fish's muscle tissue (the edible part of the fish) rather than in the fat and skin. Therefore, the only way to reduce mercury intake is to reduce the amount of contaminated fish eaten.

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