



INFORMATION ABOUT FISH FROM LAKE OROVILLE

What is in a “Health Advisory and Consumption Guidelines” report?

Chemicals in our environment can end up in the fish we eat. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) uses the findings of chemical levels in fish to develop advice for eating sport fish. In this report, OEHHA shows the chemical levels and tells how it developed advice for fish from Lake Oroville. People can use the advisory to make healthy choices when choosing which types of fish to eat and how often to eat fish caught from this lake.

Which chemicals are of concern for people eating fish from Lake Oroville?

For Lake Oroville, the chemicals of concern in fish are:

- Mercury
 - Mercury is a metal that comes from natural sources, mining, and air fallout from burning coal and other fuels.
 - Too much methylmercury, the form of mercury in fish, can harm the brain, especially in babies and children. Mothers can pass methylmercury to their babies during pregnancy.
- PCBs
 - PCBs are man-made industrial chemicals. While banned in the 1970s, they are still found in the air and water from spills, leaks, and improper disposal.
 - High levels of PCBs can cause health problems in everyone. Some forms of PCBs caused cancer in animal studies.
 - PCB can build up to very high levels in the skin, fat, and organs of fish. That is why OEHHA recommends eating only the skinless fillet (meat) of fish.

How much mercury and PCBs are found in fish from Lake Oroville?

The results from several years of studies showed that:

- Bass, channel catfish, and white catfish had high mercury levels.

- Carp and coho salmon had medium levels of mercury. Catfish and carp also had medium levels of PCBs.
- Bluegill and green sunfish had low levels of mercury and PCBs.

What does OEHHA recommend for people who want to eat fish from Lake Oroville?

- Women 18 to 45 years old and children 1 to 17 years old
 - Should not eat bass, channel catfish, or white catfish.
 - Can eat
 - No more than 1 serving per week of carp or coho salmon, or
 - No more than 2 servings per week of bluegill or green sunfish
- Women over 45 years old and men
 - Can eat
 - No more than 1 serving per week of bass, channel catfish, or white catfish, or
 - No more than 2 servings per week of carp or coho salmon, or
 - No more than 5 servings per week of bluegill or green sunfish
- More details are in “A Guide to Eating Fish from Lake Oroville” (http://www.oehha.ca.gov/fish/nor_cal/orovilleAdv.html)
- More information about OEHHA’s guidelines for eating fish is available:
 - In the Freshwater or Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations booklets from the Department of Fish and Game, or www.dfg.ca.gov/regulations
 - Call OEHHA at (916) 323-7319 or (510) 622-3170, or visit www.oehha.ca.gov (click on “FISH”)