Press Release
California Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
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Fish Advisory for El Dorado County's Jenkinson Lake Offers Safe Eating Advice for Rainbow Trout, Sunfish Species, and Black Bass Species

SACRAMENTO – A new state fish advisory issued today provides safe eating advice for three species of fish from El Dorado County's Jenkinson Lake, also known as Sly Park Lake.

The California Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) developed its recommendations based on the levels of mercury measured in fish from Jenkinson Lake, which is located a few miles south of Pollock Pines.

"Many fish have nutrients that may reduce the risk of heart disease and are an excellent source of protein," said Dr. Lauren Zeise, director of OEHHA. "By following our guidelines, people can safely eat fish low in chemical contaminants and enjoy the well-known health benefits of fish consumption."

When consuming fish from Jenkinson Lake, women ages 18-45 and children ages 1-17 may safely eat seven servings per week of Rainbow Trout, or three servings per week of sunfish species, or one serving per week of black bass species.

Women age 46 and older and men age 18 and older may safely eat seven servings per week of Rainbow Trout or sunfish species, or two servings per week of black bass species.

One serving is eight ounces prior to cooking. For fish fillets, eight ounces is roughly the size and thickness of your hand. Children should be given smaller servings.

Mercury is a naturally occurring metal that is released into the environment from mining and burning coal, and accumulates in fish in the form of methylmercury. Methylmercury can damage the brain and nervous system, especially in developing children and fetuses.

Eating fish in amounts slightly greater than the advisory's recommendations is not likely to cause health problems if it is done occasionally, such as eating fish caught during an annual vacation.

The health advisory and eating advice for Jenkinson Lake– as well as eating guidelines for other fish species and California bodies of water – are available at OEHHA's Fish Advisories webpage: http://www.oehha.ca.gov/fish/advisories. Pictorial versions of fish consumption advice are also available on that page in both English and Spanish.

The Jenkinson Lake recommendations join more than 80 other OEHHA advisories that provide site-specific, health-based fish consumption advice for many of the places where people catch and eat fish in California, including lakes, rivers, bays, reservoirs, and the California coast.

OEHHA is the primary state entity for the assessment of risks posed by chemical contaminants in the environment. Its mission is to protect and enhance public health and the environment by scientific evaluation of risks posed by hazardous substances.

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