



Press Release

California Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
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Fish Advisory for Lake Palmdale Offers Safe Eating Advice for Seven Fish Species

SACRAMENTO – A state fish advisory issued today for [Lake Palmdale](#) in Los Angeles County provides safe eating advice for black bass species, Black Crappie, Channel Catfish, goby, Hitch, Inland Silverside, and sunfish species.

Lake Palmdale is located in the City of Palmdale and is approximately 35 miles northeast of Los Angeles. Fishing in the lake is reserved for members of the Palmdale Fin and Feather Club, which stocks the lake with fish under an agreement with the Palmdale Water District.

The California Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) used data from sampling funded by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board to develop the recommendations based on the levels of mercury, PCBs, and selenium found in fish caught from the lake.

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

When consuming fish from Lake Palmdale, women ages 18-49 and children ages 1-17 may safely eat a maximum of seven total servings per week of Hitch or Inland Silverside, or six total servings per week of goby or sunfish species, or three total servings per week of Channel Catfish, or two servings per week of black bass species, or one total serving per week of Black Crappie.

Women ages 50 and older and men ages 18 and older may safely eat a maximum of seven total servings per week of Hitch or Inland Silverside, or six total servings per week of goby or sunfish species, or four total servings per week of black bass species, or three total servings per week of Channel Catfish, or two total servings per week of Black Crappie.

One serving is an eight-ounce fish fillet, measured prior to cooking, which is roughly the size and thickness of your hand. Children should be given smaller servings. For small fish species, several individual fish may make up a single serving.

A poster with the safe-eating advice for [Lake Palmdale](#) is available on OEHHA's website in both English and Spanish. For fish species found in Lake Palmdale that are not included in this advisory, OEHHA recommends following the [statewide advisory for eating fish from California lakes and reservoirs without site-specific advice](#).

Mercury is a naturally occurring metal that is released into the environment from mining and burning coal. It accumulates in fish in the form of methylmercury, which can damage the brain and nervous system, especially in developing children and fetuses. Because of this, OEHHA provides a separate set of recommendations specifically for children up to age 17, and women of childbearing age (18-49 years).

PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) are a group of industrial chemicals. At high levels of exposure, they can cause health problems, including cancer. Although they were banned in the United States in the late 1970s, PCBs persist in the environment from spills, leaks or improper disposal. PCBs accumulate in the skin, fat, and some internal organs of fish. In order to reduce exposure from PCB contaminated fish, OEHHA recommends eating only the skinless fillet (meat) portion of the fish.

Selenium is an essential nutrient that is naturally present in the environment. However, high-level exposure can cause health problems such as hair loss, gastrointestinal distress, dizziness, and tremors.

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

The Lake Palmdale advisory joins more than 100 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. Advisories are available on OEHHA's [Fish Advisories webpage](#).

OEHHA's mission is to protect and enhance the health of Californians and our state's environment through scientific evaluations that inform, support, and guide regulatory and other actions.

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