



Press Release

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

SACRAMENTO – A state fish advisory issued today for [Lake Perris](#) in Riverside County provides safe eating advice for black bass species, Common Carp, Inland Silverside, and sunfish species.

The California Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) developed the recommendations based on the levels of mercury and PCBs 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 Perris, people can safely eat fish low in chemical contaminants and enjoy the well-known health benefits of fish consumption.”

Lake Perris is located approximately 11 miles southeast of the City of Riverside.

When consuming fish from Lake Perris, women ages 18-49 and children ages 1-17 may safely eat a maximum of seven total servings per week of Inland Silverside or sunfish species, or two servings per week of black bass species, or one total serving per week of Common Carp.

Women ages 50 and older and men ages 18 and older may safely eat a maximum of seven total servings per week of Inland Silverside or sunfish species, or five servings per week of black bass species, or one total serving per week of Common Carp.

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 Perris](#) is available on OEHHA’s website in both English and Spanish. For fish species found in Lake Perris 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.

OEHHA's recommendations for Lake Perris are based on the levels of mercury and PCBs. They are independent of any advisories to limit fish intake due to levels of toxic blue-green algae bloom (cyanobacteria) detected in water samples. While algal blooms are episodic and cyanobacteria levels are temporary, mercury and PCB levels in fish are persistent and generally remain consistent for many years. Before fishing, check the [California Harmful Algal Blooms \(HABs\) Portal](#) and the [Lake Perris State Recreation Area](#) website to see if there are fish advisories related to algal blooms.

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

Lake Perris advisory recommendations join 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.

The advisory for Lake Perris, along with safe eating guidelines for fish from more than 100 other California bodies of water, is 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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