



For Immediate Release:
August 1, 2017

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Fish Advisory for Lafayette Reservoir in Contra Costa County Offers Safe Eating Advice for Four Fish Species

SACRAMENTO – A new state fish advisory issued today provides safe eating advice for black bass species, Rainbow Trout, Channel Catfish, and Goldfish from [Lafayette Reservoir](#), located in Lafayette in central Contra Costa County.

The California Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) developed the recommendations based on the levels of mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) found in fish caught from Lafayette reservoir.

“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 for fish caught at Lafayette Reservoir, people can safely eat fish low in chemical contaminants and enjoy the well-known health benefits of fish consumption.”

When consuming fish from Lafayette Reservoir, women ages 18-45 and children ages 1-17 may eat five total servings per week of Rainbow Trout, or three total servings per week of Channel Catfish, or one total serving per week of black bass species. They should not eat Goldfish.

Women age 46 and older and men age 18 and older may eat seven total servings per week of Channel Catfish, or five total servings per week of Rainbow Trout, or two total servings per week of Goldfish or black bass species.

One serving is eight ounces, measured 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. It accumulates in fish in the form of methylmercury, which can damage the brain and nervous system, especially in developing children and fetuses. Because children and fetuses are especially sensitive to mercury, OEHHA provides a separate set of recommendations specifically for children up to age 17, and women of childbearing age (age 18-45).

PCBs are a group of industrial chemicals, and high levels of exposure can cause health problems, including cancer. Although they were banned in the United States in the late 1970s, they persist in the environment for many years and are still found 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.

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 Lafayette Reservoir 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 reservoirs, lakes, rivers, bays, and the California coast.

The health advisory and eating advice for Lafayette Reservoir– as well as eating guidelines for other fish species and California bodies of water – are available on OEHHA's Fish Advisories webpage: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/fish/advisories>. [Pictorial versions](#) of fish consumption advice are also available on this page in both English and Spanish.

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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