

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment



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Fish Advisory for Santa Clara County's Lexington Reservoir Offers Safe Eating Advice for Rainbow Trout, Sunfish, Black Bass, and Other Species

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SACRAMENTO – A new state fish advisory issued today for Lexington Reservoir, located near Los Gatos in Santa Clara County, offers safe eating advice for five species of fish.

“Eating fish low in mercury provides important health benefits. It can help reduce the risk of heart disease and is an excellent source of protein,” said Dr. Lauren Zeise, acting director of the California Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). “These guidelines balance the health benefits of eating fish against the risks from exposure to methylmercury, the form of mercury found in fish.”

The recommendations developed by OEHHA for each fish species are based on levels of mercury and PCBs measured in fish from Lexington Reservoir. The lake is part of Santa Clara County’s 914-acre Lexington Reservoir County Park.

Mercury is a metal that comes from natural sources, mining, and air fallout from burning coal and other fuels. Depending on the exposure level, mercury can harm the brain and nervous system of people, especially fetuses and children as they grow.

Women ages 18 to 45 and children ages 1 to 17 can safely eat as many as seven servings per week of Rainbow Trout, or two servings per week of Inland Silverside or Threadfin Shad, or one serving per week of small sunfish species, such as Bluegill or Pumpkinseed. They should avoid eating black bass species, such as Largemouth Bass. Women ages 46 and older and men ages 18 and older can safely eat up to seven servings per week of Rainbow Trout, Inland Silverside, or Threadfin Shad, or three servings per week of small sunfish species, or one serving per week of black bass species.

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

California Environmental Protection Agency

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The health advisory and eating advice for Lexington Reservoir – as well as eating guidelines for other fish species and California bodies of water – are available at http://www.oehha.ca.gov/fish/so_cal/index.html. Pictorial fish consumption advice is also available on that 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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