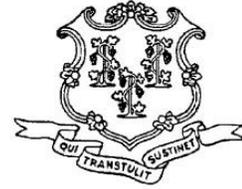


News



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DPH ISSUES ANNUAL FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORY

Reminds anglers that many fish are safe to eat
Fish consumption advisory changes for the Quinnipiac River

Hartford – The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) is issuing its annual fish consumption advisory for fish caught in Connecticut waters. *If I Catch It, Can I Eat It? A Guide to Safe Eating of Fish Caught in Connecticut*, also provides advice on consuming sushi and commercial fish sold in grocery stores and restaurants.

“This guide provides important advice on how to safely eat fish caught in Connecticut,” stated DPH Commissioner Dr. Jewel Mullen. “Fish are a good source of protein and omega-3 fatty acids, a nutrient thought to be protective of heart disease and, in pregnant women, beneficial to the developing fetus. As a result, we recommend that the public continue to eat fish. However, certain guidelines should be followed in order to eat fish safely.”

The fish advisory guide lists water bodies and species of fish in Connecticut with specific consumption recommendations. The standard advice for pregnant women and children, which are considered high risk groups, is to eat no more than one meal per month of freshwater fish caught in Connecticut. For all other groups, they are advised to eat no more than one meal per week of freshwater fish caught in the state. Trout less than 15 inches are excluded from this advisory and can be eaten with no limit.

This standard advice is due to mercury contamination found in Connecticut freshwater fish. In addition, the advice recommends that pregnant women and children avoid eating striped bass and large bluefish caught in Long Island Sound due to Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) contamination.

Consumption Advisory Changes for the Quinnipiac River

DPH maintains an advisory for the Quinnipiac River south of the Gorge to Hanover Pond of “one meal per month for everyone” for all fish species. However there is no longer need to issue a consumption advisory for fish caught in the Quinnipiac River north of the Gorge in Meriden, because new sampling data from the river indicates polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) levels in fish have decreased greatly over the past decade.

In 1996, buried drums containing PCBs were found along the Quinnipiac River in Southington. Emergency response teams from both the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency responded to the

discovery and identified that high levels of contamination were also present in river sediments and in some fish. This contamination resulted in “Do Not Eat” consumption advice for that section of the river. DEEP conducted an extensive cleanup of the river, removing the drums and the contaminated sediments. The lower PCB levels in fish are likely the result of these cleanup efforts.

“In the past several decades, Connecticut has made great progress in cleaning up the waters of our rivers, streams, lakes and Long Island Sound,” said DEEP Commissioner Robert Klee. “Unfortunately, there are still levels of pollution we are addressing in some waterways because of past environmental practices. As a result, it makes good sense to follow safe practices when it comes to the consumption of fish and we appreciate the important work of DPH in making the public aware of this.”

The updated guide, also available in Spanish, can be found on the DPH website at www.ct.gov/dph/fish and at most tackle shops and town clerks offices. For more information, or to obtain a copy of the update, please contact Sharee Rusnak at (860) 509-7740 or sharee.rusnak@ct.gov.

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