



news release

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TDH Recommends Limiting Consumption of Walleye from Lake Meredith

The Texas Department of Health (TDH) is advising people to limit their consumption of walleye from Lake Meredith in the Panhandle because of elevated levels of mercury.

TDH recommends that adults eat no more than two 8-ounce servings of walleye from the lake per month and that children eat no more than two 4-ounce servings per month.

The 16,500-acre lake on the Canadian River northwest of Amarillo is in Hutchinson, Moore and Potter counties.

Kirk Wiles, director of TDH's seafood safety program, said frequent consumption of mercury can harm the brain and nervous system.

"Fetuses and young children are especially sensitive to the effects of mercury. It can cause permanent damage to developing brains and nervous systems," he said. "Women who are pregnant or who may become pregnant certainly should follow the advisory."

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that gets into the air and water from the weathering of the earth's crust, from the burning of fossil fuels and from some industrial discharges and emissions.

There is no risk of mercury contamination from fishing, skiing, boating, swimming and other recreational activities in Lake Meredith, Wiles said. He said elevated mercury levels in the Lake Meredith walleye are the result of accumulation along the food chain, with larger walleye typically containing more mercury than do smaller walleye.

The advisory was issued after TDH laboratory tests of walleye, channel catfish, blue catfish, flathead catfish, largemouth bass, white bass, warmouth and crappie from the lake revealed the elevated mercury levels in the walleye. Mercury levels in the other fish were low to moderate.

Wiles said the consumption advisory only applies to walleye from the lake.

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(News media: for more information contact Kirk Wiles, Director, TDH Seafood Safety Division, at 512-719-0215; or Doug McBride, TDH Press Officer, at 512-458-7524.)

TDH News Online:
www.tdh.state.tx.us/news/news.htm