



news release

From The Texas Department of Health
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Health and Water Agencies Call News Conference on PCBs in Valley

Dr. David R. Smith, Texas Commissioner of Health, today issued an advisory against the consumption of fish taken from the Donna reservoir, the North Floodway of the Arroyo Colorado and all irrigation canals in Hidalgo County.

The advisory has been prompted by the discovery of excessive levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (commonly known as PCBs) in fish samples taken by the Texas Department of Health from several popular fishing areas in the Donna area. PCBs have been shown to cause cancer in animals and may cause cancer in humans.

Based on information supplied by the Texas Water Commission (TWC), there does not appear to be any evidence of PCBs in the area's public drinking water supply.

Dr. Smith and Anthony C. Grigsby, TWC Executive Director, have scheduled a joint press conference for noon, Friday, in the Pecan Room of the Best Western motel in Weslaco. At the press conference, the officials will provide additional information on the implications of the sampling results and will outline the next steps of a planned interagency investigation.

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(For more information, contact Glen Provost, Associate Commissioner for Environmental and Consumer Health, at 512/458-7541 or Margaret Wilson, Public Information Director, Public Health Promotion Division, at 512/458-7405.)