



news release

From The Texas Department of Health
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Possession of Fish from Echo Lake Prohibited

Texas Commissioner of Health David R. Smith, M.D. today issued a closure order prohibiting possession of fish taken from Echo Lake in Fort Worth.

Texas Department of Health (TDH) tests of fish samples from the lake showed elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs. The order is effective at 12:01 a.m., Dec. 5 and will last indefinitely. The closure prohibits possession of fish from the lake but does not prohibit catch-and-release fishing.

Two other Fort Worth lakes, Lake Como and Fosdic Lake, were closed to possession of fish earlier this year.

TDH was asked by City of Fort Worth officials to test fish from five area waters. Tests of fish samples showed that fish from Cement Creek Reservoir and French Creek were safe to eat.

PCBs are suspected of causing cancer in humans. The chemicals, once used in some lubricants and in electrical capacitors and transformers, were banned in 1979 but can persist in the environment for years and can readily accumulate in fish.

TDH officials said people should not eat fish from Echo Lake, Lake Como or Fosdic Lake. They said the PCB problem is not unique to Fort Worth but is a growing concern in many urban areas where domestic and industrial chemicals end up in waters people like to fish.