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DHHS Health Advisory

Fish Consumption Advisory for Lake Norman *Mecklenburg, Iredell, Lincoln, and Catawba Counties affected*

Raleigh, NC - The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health has issued a fish consumption advisory for striped bass and largemouth bass in Lake Norman in Mecklenburg, Iredell, Lincoln, and Catawba Counties. Elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were found in striped bass that exceeded the state action level for PCBs of 0.05 mg/kg. Because previous studies have shown that largemouth bass in all waters of North Carolina have elevated levels of mercury, this advisory for Lake Norman includes largemouth bass as well as striped bass.

DHHS is recommending that pregnant women, nursing women, women who may become pregnant, and children under age 15 should not eat any striped bass or largemouth bass from Lake Norman. To guard against mercury exposure and potential PCB exposure, other people should not eat more than two meals a month of largemouth bass and one meal a week of striped bass from Lake Norman. A meal of fish is considered approximately 6 ounces of uncooked fish.

PCBs may adversely impact the neurological development of children, the reproductive system, the immune system, and may cause cancer. Mercury presents an increased risk of adverse effects to the developing brain of unborn babies of pregnant women who eat fish contaminated with mercury. Young children may also be at risk of adverse neurological effects from eating fish contaminated with mercury.

The PCB and mercury contamination in fish does not present a known health risk for persons engaging in other recreational activities such as touching the water, wading, swimming, boating or handling the fish.

The Division of Public Health reiterates that the fish consumption advisory recommendation for Lake Norman is limited only to striped bass and largemouth bass.

More information on health issues related to fish contaminants is available on the DHHS Division of Public Health [website](#).