

Fish Advisory Issued for Channel Catfish, Expanded for Carp in Utah Lake

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Salt Lake City, Utah – After finding high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in Utah Lake, state officials have issued a fish consumption advisory for channel catfish, and a previous advisory issued in May 2006 for carp has been revised based on new information. The PCBs were found in samples taken from the lake as part of an effort by the Utah Department of Natural Resources, Utah Department of Health, Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

PCBs are mixtures of up to 209 individual chlorinated compounds. PCBs are oil liquids or solids consisting of man-made chemicals that are not naturally found in the environment.

Fish consumption advisory signs will be posted at access points to Utah Lake stating:

The Utah Department of Health recommends consumption of carp fillets from Utah Lake be limited to one 4-ounce meal per month for adults. Children, pregnant women and women that can become pregnant should not consume any carp fillets from Utah Lake.

Utah Department of Health recommends consumption of channel catfish fillets from Utah Lake be limited to one 4-ounce meal per month for adults. Children, pregnant women and women that can become pregnant should not consume any channel catfish fillets from Utah Lake.

The offal (all tissue except the fillet) of any fish species tested from Utah Lake in this study (i.e. black bullhead, channel catfish, common carp, walleye, and white bass) should not be consumed due to high levels of PCBs.

Eating more than these amounts over a long period of time could result in an intake of PCBs that exceeds the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency health recommendations. Any health risks associated with eating carp and channel catfish from Utah Lake are based on long-term consumption and are not tied to eating fish occasionally. There are no health risks associated with PCBs for other uses of the lake, such as swimming, boating and water skiing.

Black bullhead, white bass and walleye fillets were also tested and found to be safe for human consumption. The fish were collected as a follow up to the PCB advisory that was issued for carp in 2006. Because different standards are used for animal feed, all of the fish species tested are still considered safe for use as animal feed.

PCBs can be attached to sediments, with no effect to water quality. Because PCBs accumulate in fat, removing the skin and fat from fish fillets can significantly reduce exposure to PCBs from fish.

Information about how to prepare fish is available at <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/30cwafish.pdf>.

Because elevated levels of PCBs were found in carp, other fish species were collected and analyzed this summer. An environmental investigation will be initiated as an effort to identify and clean up the source of PCBs, if possible.