



INFORMATION ABOUT EATING FISH FROM LAKE PALMDALE (LOS ANGELES COUNTY)

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
California Environmental Protection Agency
April 2020

Why did OEHHA develop an advisory for eating fish from Lake Palmdale?

OEHHA developed an advisory for Lake Palmdale because of mercury, PCBs, and selenium found in the fish caught from this water body. Lake Palmdale is located in the city of Palmdale in Los Angeles County, approximately 35 miles northeast of Los Angeles. Fishing at the lake is allowed only for members of the Palmdale Fin and Feather Club, which stocks the lake with fish under a lease agreement with the Palmdale Water District. This advisory is part of an ongoing effort by OEHHA to provide safe-eating advice for fish in different California water bodies.

Why should I eat fish?

- Low-contaminant fish are an important part of a healthy, well-balanced diet. The American Heart Association recommends eating at least two servings of fish each week.
- Fish are a good source of protein and vitamins, and are a primary dietary source of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Eating low-contaminant fish while pregnant may help the baby's brain develop.

Which chemicals are of concern for people eating fish from Lake Palmdale?

- Mercury
 - Mercury is a metal that comes from natural sources, mining, and air fallout from burning coal and other fuels. It is the most commonly found contaminant in fish.
 - Too much methylmercury, the form of mercury found in fish, can harm the brain, especially in fetuses, babies, and children. Mothers can pass methylmercury to their babies during pregnancy.
 - Because fetuses, babies, and children are especially sensitive to mercury, OEHHA has one set of advice for the amount of mercury-containing fish that women age 18-49 years and children should eat, and another set of advice for women 50 years and older and men 18 years and older.
- Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)
 - PCBs are industrial chemicals. While banned in the 1970s, they persist for many years in the environment and are still found in the air, sediment, and water from spills, leaks, and improper disposal.

- High levels of PCBs can increase cancer risk. PCBs may also harm a developing fetus, which can include effects on growth and learning. Women can pass PCBs on to their babies during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- PCBs can build up to very high levels in the skin, fat, and some internal organs of fish. That is why OEHHA recommends eating only skinless fillet (meat) of fish.
- Selenium
 - Selenium is a metalloid that comes from natural sources and is an essential nutrient.
 - High levels of selenium can cause health problems including hair loss, gastrointestinal distress, dizziness, and tremors.

How did OEHHA determine the consumption guidelines for fish from Lake Palmdale?

- OEHHA compared chemical levels in fish caught from Lake Palmdale to levels that are considered safe for human consumption.
- OEHHA's consumption guidelines balance the risks and benefits of fish consumption.

What does OEHHA recommend for people who want to eat fish from Lake Palmdale?

- OEHHA recommends the amounts and types of fish that may be eaten each week as "servings." A serving is about the size and thickness of your hand for fish fillets. Give children smaller servings. For smaller fish species, several individual fish may be required to yield a serving.
- Women 18-49 years and children 1-17 years
 - May eat:
 - 1 total serving per week of Black Crappie, or
 - 2 total servings per week of black bass species, or
 - 3 total servings per week of Channel Catfish, or
 - 6 total servings per week of goby or sunfish species, or
 - 7 total servings per week of Hitch or Inland Silverside
- Women 50 years and older and men age 18 years and older
 - May eat:
 - 2 total servings per week of Black Crappie, or
 - 3 total servings per week of Channel Catfish, or
 - 4 total servings per week of black bass species, or
 - 6 total servings per week of goby or sunfish species, or
 - 7 total servings per week of Hitch or Inland Silverside
- For additional fish species found in Lake Palmdale and not included in this advisory, OEHHA recommends following the [statewide advisory for eating fish from California's lakes and reservoirs without site-specific advice.](#)

What else can I do to protect my health and the health of my family?

- Eat a variety of fish.
- Eat smaller (younger) fish of legal size.
- Eat only the skinless fillet or meat portion of fish.
- Thoroughly cook the fish, allow the juice to drain away.
- Learn about OEHHA's guidelines for eating sport fish in California:
 - Visit <https://oehha.ca.gov/fish/advisories>, or call OEHHA at (916) 324-7572 or (510) 622-3170
 - Check the Freshwater or Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations booklets from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, or visit <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Regulations>



Women
(18-49 Years)

Children
(1-17 Years)



Women
(50+ Years)

Men
(18+ Years)

7 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

OR

6 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

OR

3 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

OR

2 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

OR

1 TOTAL
SERVING
A WEEK

7 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

OR

6 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

OR

3 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

OR

4 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

OR

2 TOTAL
SERVINGS
A WEEK

Serving Size

A serving of fish is about the size and thickness of your hand. Give children smaller servings.

For Adults



For Children



A GUIDE TO EATING FISH

from
LAKE PALMDALE

(LOS ANGELES COUNTY)

Eat the Good Fish

Eating fish that are low in chemicals may provide health benefits to children and adults.



Avoid the Bad Fish

Eating fish with higher levels of chemicals like mercury or PCBs may cause health problems in children and adults.



Choose the Right Fish

Chemicals may be more harmful to unborn babies and children.



Hitch



Inland Silverside



Goby



Sunfish Species



Channel Catfish



Black Bass Species

♥ high in omega-3s



Black Crappie



California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

web www.oehha.ca.gov/fish

email fish@oehha.ca.gov

phone (916) 324-7572

Eat only the skinless fillet



Eat only the meat



Some chemicals are higher in the skin, fat, and guts.