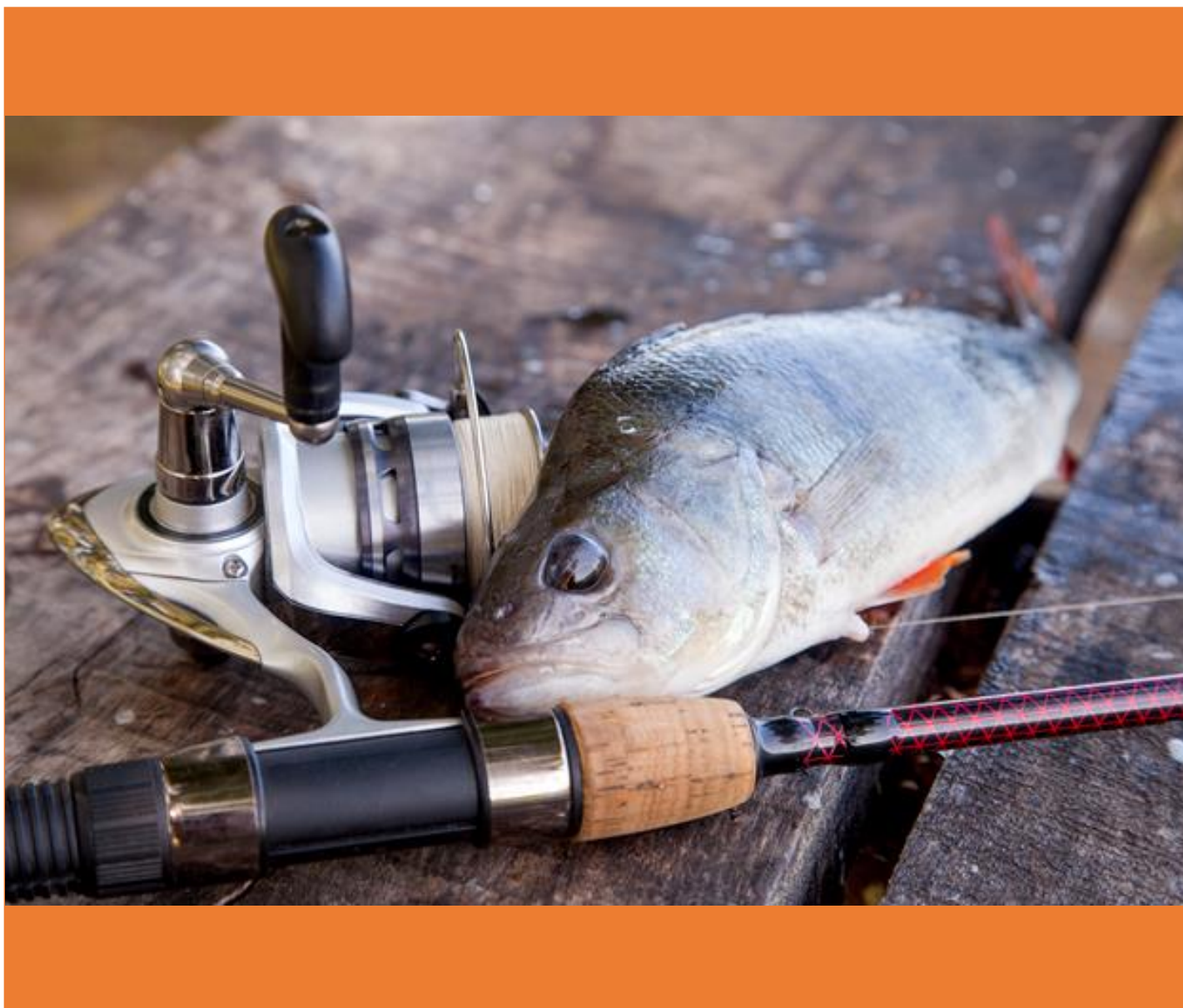


# Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

March 2019



Department of Health  
Department of Natural Resources  
Environmental Protection Agency

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## Introduction

This document provides information about fish consumption advisories issued by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) for sport fish caught in Ohio waters. ODH, in cooperation with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), issues this advice under Ohio law (Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3701).

People who fish in Ohio waters should use this document to find important information on the safety of consumption of fish caught in Ohio's waters. If you are an angler, or someone working with an organization concerned with providing advisory information to the public, please contact us directly at:

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency  
(800) 755-4769  
fishmail@epa.ohio.gov  
[www.epa.ohio.gov](http://www.epa.ohio.gov)

Or:

Ohio Department of Health  
(614) 728-9452  
BEH@odh.ohio.gov  
[www.odh.ohio.gov](http://www.odh.ohio.gov)

**Note: Fish consumption advisories are subject to change based on new data.** This document is updated routinely.



## Fish for Your Health: Overall Advice on Fish Consumption

### Fish: A Healthy Part of Your Diet

**There are many benefits to including fish in a balanced diet for people of all ages.** Fish are high in protein, low in fat, rich in many vitamins and minerals, and are the primary food source of healthy oils called omega-3 fatty acids. Studies suggest that omega-3 fatty acids are important during fetal brain and eye development and may help to prevent heart disease in adults.

Additionally, fishing can be a rewarding hobby that brings people closer to nature, provides a source of natural food, and can even help with wildlife conservation.

**Unfortunately, some fish in Ohio's waters are contaminated with harmful chemicals** like methylmercury and a group of chemicals called PCBs. Over time, eating contaminated fish can cause health problems.

By making safe fish choices, all Ohioans can enjoy the health benefits that fish offer.

### Choose Better Fish

In general, some fish tend to be lower in contaminants than others. Use the following table to guide your Ohio sport fish consumption choices:

**Table 1. General Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advice**

Meal Frequency	Fish Species
Two meals/week*	Yellow perch Sunfish (e.g., bluegill, green, longear, redear)
One meal/week	All fish not specified in this table
One meal/month	Flathead catfish 23" and over Northern pike 23" and over Steelhead trout from Lake Erie and its tributaries

\* Consumption of these species should be limited to one meal/week from: Ashtabula River, Cuyahoga River, Mahoning River, Nesmith Lake, Ohio Canal, Ohio River and West Branch Reservoir; and as otherwise indicated in the Limit Your Meals from These Waters section of this advisory. Always refer to the full Advisory Table to determine if there is a more or less restrictive advisory on fish from a certain body of water.

Anglers in Ohio can also use the following general advice to harvest healthier fish with fewer contaminants:

- Choose the smallest fish within the legal size limit. Smaller, younger fish tend to have fewer contaminants built up in their bodies.
- Avoid bottom feeders and suckers.
- Avoid fish from a body of water known to be contaminated.
- Vary the types of fish you catch and eat.

Go to [www.wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/species-guide-index](http://www.wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/species-guide-index) for pictures of common Ohio sport fish.

The following chart can help you choose safe fish from Ohio waters and from grocery stores and restaurants.

**From Ohio waters,**

Choose:

- Crappie
- Yellow perch
- Bluegill
- Sunfish



Avoid:

- Any fish listed as “Do Not Eat” Consuming fish more often than the advisory recommends
- Bottom-feeders and suckers
- Older, larger fish



**From grocery stores and restaurants,**

Choose:

- Shrimp
- Canned light tuna
- Salmon
- Tilapia



Avoid:

- Shark
- Swordfish
- Tilefish
- Orange roughy
- Bigeye tuna
- Marlin
- King mackerel



**“Do Not Eat” Advisories**

Some species of fish from certain Ohio waters should not be eaten at all. The following table summarizes all Ohio sportfish for which a **Do Not Eat** advisory has been issued:

**Table 2. “Do Not Eat” Advisories**

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Contaminant
Dicks Creek	Cincinnati-Dayton Road, Middletown, to the Great Miami River	All Species	PCBs
Great Miami River	Lowhead Dam at Monument Avenue, Dayton, to Main Street, Moraine	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	PCBs
Little Scioto River	State Route 739 near Marion to Holland Road near Marion	All Species	PAHs
Ohio River	Pennsylvania Border, East Liverpool, to Belleville Lock	Channel Catfish 18” and over	PCBs
Tuscarawas River	Massillon to State Route 416, New Philadelphia	Common Carp	PCBs

## Serving Size

In this guide, the terms “serving size” and “meal” mean the same thing.



### Adult Serving

**4 – 6 ounces cooked**

An adult serving is about the size of the palm of an adult's hand.



### Child Serving

**2 – 3 ounces cooked**

A child serving is about half the size of the palm of an adult's hand.

In the Advisory Table on the following pages, a recommended meal frequency of “one/week” means that an adult should eat no more than 4 – 6 ounces (cooked) of that fish each week, and that a child should eat no more than 2 – 3 ounces (cooked) of that fish each week.

A recommended meal frequency of “two/week” means that an adult should eat no more than 8-12 ounces (cooked) of that fish each week. Keep in mind that this could either be one large meal totaling 8-12 ounces, or any combination of smaller meals that equals 8-12 ounces. A recommended meal frequency of “two/week” mean that a child should eat no more than 4-6 ounces (cooked) of that fish each week.

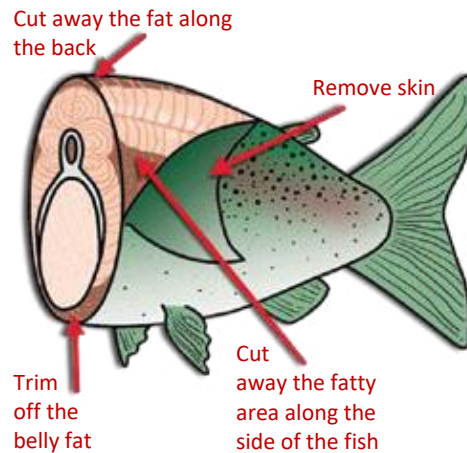
A child's portion size will vary based on the child's age, size, and nutritional needs. If you are uncertain what portion size is right for you or your child, discuss your dietary needs with your doctor.

**Please note that the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) bases its calculations for Ohio sport fish consumption advisories on a 6-ounce meal, cooked (8 ounces, uncooked).** These calculations help drive advisories which will be protective of those who eat smaller meals, as well.



## Prepare it Healthy

When preparing whole fish, trim off the skin and fat before cooking to reduce contaminants.



- Cook and eat only the fillet. Discard the fat and skin before cooking.
- Bake, broil, or grill the fish on a rack so that the fat can drip away. This will remove certain contaminants, such as PCBs, and these methods won't add extra unhealthy fats as with frying. There is little evidence that pan frying removes contaminants.
- If poaching or deep-frying fish, discard the poaching liquid or cooking oil.

For Ohio sportfish recipes, visit <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/education-and-outdoor-discovery/wild-ohio-cookbook/fish-recipes>



## Sensitive Populations

The statewide mercury advisory, issued in 1997, is primarily for pregnant women or women of child-bearing age who may become pregnant, and for children age 15 and under. These groups are considered “sensitive populations” as fetuses whose mothers eat fish before or during pregnancy and children who eat fish are more vulnerable to the health effects of contaminants. They are advised to eat no more than one meal/week of fish (any species) from any Ohio body of water, except those listed as safe to eat two meals/week (see **Table 1** on page 4), or no more than the number of meals specified for the more restrictive advisories listed in the Advisory Table section of this document.

Although the one meal/week advice applies mainly to these sensitive populations, the general advisory issued in 2003 recommends that everyone follow that advice.



In 2017, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued advice to help women who are pregnant or may become pregnant – as well as breastfeeding mothers and parents of young children – make informed choices when it comes to store-bought fish and fish served in restaurants (including shellfish) that are healthy and safe to eat.

To help these consumers more easily understand the types of fish to select, the agencies have created an easy-to-use reference chart that sorts 62 types of fish into three categories:

- Best choices (eat two to three servings a week) – fish in this category make up nearly 90 percent of fish eaten in the United States
- Good choices (eat one serving a week)
- Fish to avoid

The updated advice cautions parents of young children and certain women to avoid seven types of fish that typically have higher mercury levels: tilefish from the Gulf of Mexico; shark; swordfish; orange roughy; bigeye tuna; marlin; and king mackerel. Choices lower in mercury include some of the most commonly eaten fish, such as shrimp, pollock, salmon, canned light tuna, tilapia, catfish and cod.

For details, including a link to the reference chart and questions and answers in both English and Spanish, visit [www.epa.gov/fish-tech/2017-epa-fda-advice-about-eating-fish-and-shellfish](http://www.epa.gov/fish-tech/2017-epa-fda-advice-about-eating-fish-and-shellfish).



## Advisory Table

### How to Use This Table

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Example River	State Route 805, Columbus, to mouth (Ohio Lake)	Channel Catfish, Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury

- In Column 1, find the body of water in which you are fishing.
- In Column 2, find the specific portion of the body of water in which you are fishing. If the advisory applies to the entire body of water, Column 2 will say “All waters”.
- In Column 3, find the species of fish for which there are advisories in this body of water. If a length is noted, measure the fish from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail fin. See pictures of many common Ohio sport fish at <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/species-guide-index/fish>
- In Column 4, find the recommended meal frequency for a specific fish. Typical recommendations are:
  - DO NOT EAT – Catch and release only; 0 meals per year
  - One/two months – 6 meals per year
  - One/month – 12 meals per year
  - One/week – 52 meals per year
  - Two/week – 104 meals per year
  - Unrestricted – No limit on meals per year
- In Column 5, find the contaminant causing the advisory.

**Example interpretation:** In the fictional advisory table above, channel catfish and largemouth bass caught from the Example River between S.R. 805 in Columbus and the mouth of the river at Ohio Lake should only be eaten once per month due to mercury contamination.

If your water body of interest is not listed in the advisory table, please refer to **Table 1. General Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advice** on page 4.

Advisory Table

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Acton Lake	All waters (Butler, Preble Counties)	Channel Catfish	Two/week	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish, Common Carp, Saugeye	Unrestricted	--
Adams Lake	All waters (Adams County)	Bluegill Sunfish, Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Ashtabula River	Hilldom Road to U.S. Route 20/Prospect Road (Ashtabula County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
		Smallmouth Bass	One/month	PCBs
	U.S. Route 20 (Prospect Road) to mouth (Lake Erie) (Ashtabula County)	Common Carp, Freshwater Dam	One/month	PCBs
Atwood Lake	All waters (Carroll, Tuscarawas Counties)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish, Saugeye, White Crappie	Unrestricted	--
Auglaize River	U.S. Route 33, Wapakoneta to Maumee River, Defiance (Allen, Auglaize, Defiance, Paulding, Putman Counties)	Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Rock Bass	One/month	Mercury
Bad Creek	All waters (Fulton County)	Channel Catfish	Two/week	Mercury
Belmont Lake	All waters (Belmont County)	Channel Catfish	Two/week	Mercury
		Largemouth Bass, Saugeye	One/month	Mercury
Berlin Lake	All waters (Mahoning, Portage, Stark Counties)	Channel Catfish	One/month	PCBs
		Common Carp	One/month	Lead, PCBs
Big Darby Creek	U.S. Route 42, Plain City, to Alkire Road, Georgesville (Franklin, Madison, Union Counties)	Channel Catfish	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
	Alkire Road, Georgesville, to mouth (Scioto River) (Franklin, Pickaway Counties)	Channel Catfish Freshwater Drum 20" and over, Smallmouth Bass	One/month One/month	Mercury, PCBs Mercury
Black Fork Mohican River	State Route 39, Melco, to mouth (Mohican River) (Ashland, Richland Counties)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
	All waters (Ashland, Richland Counties)	Freshwater Drum	Two/week	Mercury
		Channel Catfish Rock Bass	One/month One/month	PCBs Mercury
Black River	Interstate 80 to Homewood Park, Lorain (Lorain County)	Channel Catfish	One/month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
	Homewood Park, Lorain, to Erie St./U.S. Route 6	Common Carp, Channel Catfish	One/month	PCBs

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<b>Body of Water</b>	<b>Area Under Advisory</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Meal Frequency</b>	<b>Contaminant</b>
Black River (Continued)	(Lorain County)	Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
	Erie St./U.S. Route 6 to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lorain County)	Common Carp	One/two months	PCBs
		Channel Catfish	One/month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
Bokes Creek	All waters (Logan County)	Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Buckeye Lake	All waters (Fairfield, Licking, Perry Counties)	Black Crappie, Saugeye	Two/week	Mercury
Chagrin River	Interstate 90 to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lake County)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Chippewa Lake	All waters (Medina County)	Common Carp, White Crappie	Two/week	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish, Channel Catfish	Unrestricted	--
C.J. Brown Reservoir	All waters (Clark County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Two/week	Mercury
Clark Lake	All waters	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Two/week	Mercury
Clear Creek	Clearport Road, Clearport, to mouth (Hocking River) (Fairfield, Hocking Counties)	Common Carp	One/month	Mercury
Clear Fork Reservoir	All waters (Richland County)	Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
Conneaut Creek	All waters (Ashtabula County)	Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Cross Creek	Reeds Mill Road to mouth (Ohio River) (Jefferson County)	Channel Catfish	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Cuyahoga River	State Route 87, Russell Park, to Ohio Edison Dam Pool (Geauga, Portage, Summit Counties)	Rock Bass	Two/week	Mercury
		Black Crappie, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
	Ohio Edison Dam Pool to mouth (Lake Erie) (Cuyahoga, Summit Counties)	Rock Bass	Two/week	Mercury
		Brown Bullhead, Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo	One/month	PCBs
		White Sucker 16" and over, Smallmouth Bass 15" and over	One/month	Mercury
	Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury, PCBs	
Delaware Lake	All waters	Bluegill Sunfish, Common Carp	Two/week	Mercury
		Black Crappie	One/week	Arsenic
		Channel Catfish	One/week	PCBs

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Delaware Lake (Continued)		Largemouth Bass	One/week	Arsenic, Mercury
Deer Creek	Interstate 70 to mouth (Scioto River) (Fayette, Madison, Pickaway, Ross Counties)	Channel Catfish, White Crappie	Two/week	Mercury
Deer Creek Lake	All waters (Fayette, Pickaway Counties)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass, White Crappie	Two/week	Mercury
Dicks Creek	Cincinnati-Dayton Road, Middletown, to the Great Miami River (Butler County)	All Species	<b>DO NOT EAT</b>	PCBs
Dillon Lake	All waters (Muskingum County)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
Dow Lake	All waters (Athens County)	Channel Catfish, Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Dry Fork Whitewater River	All waters (Hamilton, Butler Counties)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Duck Creek	Township Road 329, Stanleyville, to State Route 26, Norwood (Washington County)	Common Carp, Sauger	One/month	Total DDT
		Common Carp, Sauger	One/month	Total DDT
		Black Crappie, Freshwater Drum, Saugeye 16" and over	One/month	Mercury
East Branch Black River	Richman Road, Lodi, to mouth (Black River) (Lorain, Medina Counties)	Common Carp 23" and over, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Bullhead	One/month	Mercury
East Branch Rocky River	State Route 3, North Royalton, to mouth (Rocky River) (Cuyahoga County)	Rock Bass	One/month	Mercury
East Fork Lake (Harsha Lake)	All waters (Clermont County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
East Fork Little Miami River	All waters (Brown, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton, Highland Counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
Eastwood Lake	All waters (Montgomery County)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Fish Creek	All waters (Williams County)	Rock Bass	One/month	Mercury
Findley Reservoir #2	All waters (Hancock County)	Walleye, White Bass	Unrestricted	--

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Ford (Hamilton Hydraulic Canal)	All waters (Butler County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Forked Run Lake	All waters (Meigs County)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass, White Crappie	One/month	Mercury
Four Mile Creek	Acton Lake to Sevenmile Creek (Butler County)	Smallmouth Bass 17" and over	One/month	Mercury
Grand Lake St. Marys	All waters (Auglaize, Mercer Counties)	Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
Grand River	Lake Estabrook, Parkman, to Sweitzer Road, Camp Yakewi (Ashtabula, Geauga, Trumbull Counties)	Common Carp 22" and over	One/month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass, Silver Redhorse, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Yellow Bullhead	One/month	Mercury
	Sweitzer Road, Camp Yakewi, to State Route 2, Painesville (Ashtabula, Lake Counties)	Common Carp 22" and over, Rainbow Trout	One/month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass, Silver Redhorse, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Yellow Bullhead	One/month	Mercury
	State Route 2, Painesville, to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lake County)	Common Carp 18" and over, Rainbow Trout	One/month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Silver Redhorse, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Bullhead	One/month	Mercury
Great Miami River	Downstream of Indian Lake to Lowhead Dam at Monument Avenue, Dayton (Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Shelby Counties)	Common Carp, Channel Catfish, Flathead Catfish	One/month	PCBs
		Largemouth Bass, Saugeye, Smallmouth Bass, White Bass	One/month	Mercury
	Lowhead Dam at Monument Avenue, Dayton, to Main Street, Moraine (Montgomery County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	<b>DO NOT EAT</b>	PCBs
		Flathead Catfish	One/month	PCBs, Mercury
		Golden Redhorse, Smallmouth Redhorse	One/month	PCBs
Largemouth Bass, Saugeye,	One/month	Mercury		

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Great Miami River (Continued)	Main Street, Moraine, to State Route 73 near Middletown (Butler, Montgomery, Warren Counties)	Smallmouth Bass, White Bass		
		Flathead Catfish	One/month	PCBs, Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Golden Redhorse, Smallmouth Redhorse	One/month	PCBs
		Largemouth Bass, Saugeye, Smallmouth Bass, White Bass	One/month	Mercury
	State Route 73 near Middletown to Harrison Pike, Miamitown (Butler, Hamilton, Warren Counties)	Striped Bass Hybrid	One/two months	PCBs, Lead
		Flathead Catfish	One/month	PCBs, Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Redhorse	One/month	PCBs
		Largemouth Bass, Saugeye, Smallmouth Bass, White Bass	One/month	Mercury
	Harrison Pike, Miamitown, to mouth (Ohio River) (Hamilton County)	Striped Bass Hybrid	One/two months	*PCBs, Lead
		Flathead Catfish	One/month	PCBs, Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Smallmouth Redhorse	One/month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum 16" and over, Largemouth Bass, Saugeye, White Bass	One/month	Mercury
	Greenville Creek	All waters (Darke, Miami Counties)	Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month
Griggs Reservoir	All waters (Franklin County)	Common Carp	Two/week	Mercury
Guilford Lake	All waters (Columbiana County)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish, Channel Catfish, White Crappie	Unrestricted	--
Hamilton Hydraulic Canal	(see "Ford Hydraulic Canal")			
Highlandtown Lake	All waters (Columbiana County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Hocking River	Rock Mill Road, Rock Mill, to State Route 33, The Plains (Athens, Fairfield, Hocking Counties)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs, Mercury
		Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
		Black Crappie	Unrestricted	--
	State Route 33, The Plains, to U.S. Route 50/State Route 32, Athens	Freshwater Drum Walleye, Smallmouth Bass,	One/month One/month	PCBs Mercury



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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Hocking River (Continued)	(Athens, Hocking Counties)	Spotted Bass		
		Black Crappie	Unrestricted	--
	U.S. Route 50/State route 32, Athens, to mouth (Ohio River) (Athens County)	Freshwater Drum	One/month	PCBs
		Spotted Bass	One/month	Lead
		Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
		Rock Bass	Two/week	Mercury
	Black Crappie	Unrestricted	--	
Huron River	All waters (Erie, Huron Counties)	Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo, Channel Catfish, Flathead Catfish	One/month	PCBs
		Rock Bass, White Crappie	Two/week	Mercury
		Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury
Indian Lake	All waters (Logan County)	Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
		Black Crappie, Bluegill Sunfish, Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Saugeye	Unrestricted	--
Jefferson Lake	All waters (Jefferson County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Killdeer Pond #30	All waters (Wyandot County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Kiser Lake	All waters (Champaign County)	Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish	Unrestricted	--
Knox Lake	All waters (Knox County)	Common Carp, White Crappie	Two/week	Mercury
		Channel Catfish	Unrestricted	--
Kokosing River	County Road 13/Green Valley Road, Mount Vernon, to mouth (Walhonding River) (Coshocton, Knox Counties)	Rock Bass 8" and over, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
LaDue Reservoir	All waters (Geauga County)	Brown Bullhead, Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
Lake Erie	All waters (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky Counties)	Common Carp 27" and over	One/two months	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass	One/month	PCBs, Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp 27" and under, Freshwater Drum, Lake Trout, Steelhead Trout, White Bass, Whitefish 21" and over, White Perch	One/month	PCBs
		Brown Bullhead	One/month	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish	Unrestricted	--
Lake Erie Tributaries	All waters	Steelhead Trout	One/month	PCBs

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Lake Erie Tributaries (Continued)	(Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Lake Lorain, Lucas, Ottawa, Sandusky Counties)			
Lake Hope	All waters (Vinton County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Lake La Su An	All waters (Williams County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish	One/week	Mercury
Lake Lavere	All waters (Williams County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Lake Logan	All waters (Hocking County)	Common Carp, White Crappie	Two/week	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish, Channel Catfish, Saugeye	Unrestricted	--
Lake Loramie	All waters (Shelby, Auglaize Counties)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Saugeye, White Crappie	Unrestricted	--
Lake Milton	All waters (Mahoning County)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Lake Nesmith	All waters (Summit County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Lake Sue	All waters (Williams County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Lake Vesuvius	All waters (Lawrence County)	Bluegill Sunfish	One/week	Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Lake White	All waters (Pike County)	Common Carp	Two/week	Mercury
Leesville Lake	All waters (Carroll County)	Black Crappie, Bluegill Sunfish, Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Yellow Perch	Two/week	Mercury
		Saugeye	One/month	Mercury
Licking River	Adjacent Summit Street, Newark, to mouth (Muskingum River) (Licking, Muskingum Counties)	Channel Catfish	One/month	PCBs
Little Beaver Creek	Upstream of Bell School Road, Williamsport, to Pennsylvania State Line near Grimms Bridge Road (Columbiana County)	Channel Catfish	One/two months	PCBs
		Common Carp, Sauger	One/month	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass 12" and over	One/month	Mercury
Little Cuyahoga River	State Route 532 near Mogadore to mouth (Cuyahoga River) (Summit County)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
		Yellow Bullhead	One/month	Lead

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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Little Miami River	Lower Bellbrook Road, Bellbrook, to mouth (Ohio River) (Clermont, Greene, Hamilton, Warren Counties)	Common Carp 24" and over, Freshwater Drum 16" and over, Sauger, Silver Redhorse, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Little Muskingum River	Hill's Covered Bridge to mouth (Ohio River) (Washington County)	Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
		Spotted Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Little Scioto River	State Route 739 near Marion to Holland Road near Marion (Marion County)	All Species	<b>DO NOT EAT</b>	PAHs
Little Scioto River (Southeast Ohio River tributary)	Millstone Road to mouth (Scioto River) (Scioto County)	Channel Catfish	One/month	PCBs, Mercury
		Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
Mad River	U.S. Route 36, Urbana, to mouth (Great Miami River) (Champaign, Clark, Greene, Montgomery Counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
		Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Mahoning River	Rockhill Avenue NE, Alliance, to Pennsylvania State Line (Mahoning, Portage, Stark, Trumbull Counties)	Channel Catfish	One/two months	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass, Walleye	One/month	*Mercury, PCBs
		Bluegill Sunfish, Common Carp Northern Pike, Rock Bass	One/month	PCBs
		Yellow Perch	One/week	PCBs
Maumee River	Indiana State Line to Defiance (Defiance, Paulding Counties)	Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
	Defiance to Perrysburg (Defiance, Henry, Lucas, Wood Counties)	Channel Catfish	One/month	PCBs
		Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
	Perrysburg to Interstate 75 (Lucas, Wood Counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
		Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
Interstate 75 to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lucas County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Smallmouth Bass Flathead Catfish,	One/month	PCBs Mercury/PCBs	

2019 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Maumee River (Continued)		Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Buffalo		
Meadowbrook Lake	Perrysburg to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lucas, Wood Counties)	Channel Catfish	One/two months	PCBs
Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek^	Allen Road, Salem, to State Route 14, Millville (Columbiana, Mahoning Counties)	Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
		Sauger	One/month	PCBs
	State Route 14, Millville, to mouth (Little Beaver Creek) (Columbiana County)	Common Carp, Sauger	One/month	PCBs
		Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury
Mill Creek (Ashtabula)	South Denmark Road, Jefferson, to mouth (Grand River) (Ashtabula County)	Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass	One/month	Mercury
Mill Creek (Cincinnati)	Interstate 275 to the Ohio River (Hamilton County)	Striped Bass Hybrid	One/month	PCBs
Mill Creek (Marysville)	State Route 36 to mouth (Scioto River) (Union County)	Saugeye	Two/week	Mercury
		Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Mohican River	County Highway 23, Spellacy, to mouth (Walhonding River) (Coshocton, Holmes, Knox Counties)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
		Rock Bass	One/month	Mercury
Mosquito Creek	All waters (Trumbull County)	Northern Pike	One/month	Mercury
		Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
		Bluegill Sunfish	One/week	PCBs, Lead
Muskingum River	Zanesville Dam, Zanesville, to mouth (Ohio River) (Morgan, Muskingum, Washington Counties)	Smallmouth Buffalo 24” and over	One/two months	PCBs
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo under 24”, White Bass	One/month	PCBs
		Flathead Catfish 24” and over, Saugeye, Striped Bass Hybrid	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
New Lyme Lake	All waters (Ashtabula County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Nimishillen Creek	All waters (Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas Counties)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
		Green Sunfish	Unrestricted	--
North Branch Portage River	All waters (Wood County)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
North Turkeyfoot Creek	All waters (Henry County)	Channel Catfish	Two/week	Mercury
		Common Carp	Unrestricted	--

2019 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Ohio Brush Creek	State Route 73, Louden, to mouth (Ohio River) (Adams County)	Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
Ohio Canal	See "Portage Canal (Summit County)"			
Ohio River	Pennsylvania Border, East Liverpool, to Belleville Lock (Athens, Belmont, Columbiana, Jefferson, Meigs, Monroe, Washington Counties)	Channel Catfish 18" and over	<b>DO NOT EAT</b>	PCBs
		Channel Catfish under 18", Common Carp, Striped Bass Hybrid, White Bass	One/two months	PCBs
	Belleville Lock to Indiana Border (Adams, Brown, Clermont, Gallia, Hamilton, Lawrence, Meigs, Scioto Counties)	Black Crappie, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Sauger, Saugeye, Smallmouth Bass, Smallmouth Buffalo, Spotted Bass, All Suckers, Walleye	One/month	PCBs
		Channel Catfish 18" and over	One/two months	PCBs
		Channel Catfish under 18", Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Striped Bass, Striped Bass Hybrid, All Suckers, White Bass	One/month	PCBs
		Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
Olentangy River	State Route 95, Claridon, to mouth (Scioto River) (Delaware, Franklin, Marion Counties)	Smallmouth Bass 12" and over	One/month	Mercury
O'Shaughnessy Reservoir	All waters (Delaware County)	Common Carp, White Crappie	Two/week	Mercury
Ottawa River (Lima)	Cool Road, Allen County, to mouth (Auglaize River) (Allen, Putnam Counties)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Ottawa River (Toledo)	Main Street, Sylvania, to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lucas County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Golden Shiner	One/month	PCBs
		Pumpkinseed Sunfish	One/week	PCBs

## 2019 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Paint Creek	State Route 734 near Jeffersonville to near Plyley's Lane at Belleview Avenue, Belleview Heights (Fayette, Highland, Madison, Ross Counties)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
		Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
	Near Plyley's Lane at Belleview Avenue, Belleview Heights, to mouth (Scioto River) (Ross County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Paint Creek Lake	All waters (Highland County)	Saugeye	Two/week	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish	Unrestricted	--
Piedmont Lake	All waters (Harrison County)	Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
		Bluegill Sunfish	Unrestricted	--
Pike Lake	All waters (Pike County)	Channel Catfish	Two/week	Mercury
Pine Creek	Monroe Road to mouth (Ohio River) (Lawrence, Scioto Counties)	Sauger, Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
Portage Canal (Ohio Canal)	All waters (Summit County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Portage River	Ohio Turnpike to Lake Erie (Ottawa County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/two months	PCBs
Punderson Lake	All waters (Geauga County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Pymatuning Reservoir	All waters (Ashtabula County)	Largemouth Bass	Two/week	Mercury
Raccoon Creek	State Route 160, Vinton, to mouth (Ohio River) (Vinton, Gallia Counties)	Freshwater Drum, Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
Rocky Fork Lake	All waters (Highland County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Two/week	Mercury
Rocky Fork Lake (Continued)		Bluegill Sunfish	Unrestricted	--
Rocky Fork Licking River	Jobs Road near Davis Farm Bridge to mouth (Licking River) (Licking County)	Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Rocky Fork Little Scioto River	Kendall Road, Minford, to mouth (Little Scioto River) (Scioto County)	Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
Rocky Fork Mohican River	Interstate 71 to mouth (Black Fork Mohican River) (Richland County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Rush Creek Lake	All waters (Fairfield, Perry Counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	Two/week	Mercury
		Redear Sunfish	One/week	Arsenic
Rush Run Lake	All waters (Preble County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury



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Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Salt Creek	State Route 56 near Election Road, Haynes, to mouth (Scioto River) (Hocking, Ross, Vinton Counties)	Channel Catfish 18" and over, Sauger, Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
Salt Fork Reservoir	All waters (Guernsey County)	Bluegill Sunfish	Unrestricted	--
Salt Lick Creek	North High Street, Jackson, to County Road 216/Springer Road (Jackson, Ross Counties)	Spotted Bass	One/month	Mercury
Sandusky River	State Route 598, Leesville, to Rice Road, south of Ballville Dam, Ballville (Crawford, Sandusky, Seneca, Wyandot Counties)	Channel Catfish 16" and over, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
	Rice Road, south of Ballville Dam, Ballville, to mouth (Lake Erie) (Sandusky County)	Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo	One/month	PCBs
		Channel Catfish 16" and over, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Sandy Creek	Stump Road, Minerva, to mouth (Tuscarawas River) (Carroll, Columbiana, Stark, Tuscarawas Counties)	Common Carp, Rock Bass	One/month	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
Schoonover Lake	All waters (Allen County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Scioto River	U.S. Route 68, Kenton, to Ostrander Road, Warrensburg (Delaware, Hardin, Marion Counties)	Northern Pike, Saugeye 19" and over, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish 21" and over	One/month	PCBs
	Ostrander Road, Warrensburg, to Greenlawn Dam, Columbus (Delaware, Franklin, Pickaway Counties)	Saugeye 19" and over	One/month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
	Greenlawn Dam, Columbus, to U.S. Route 35, Chillicothe (Pickaway, Ross Counties)	Saugeye 19" and over, White Bass 12" and over	One/month	Mercury
		Flathead Catfish	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
	U.S. Route 35, Chillicothe, to State Route 335, Omega (Pike, Ross Counties)	White Bass 12" and over	One/month	Mercury
Flathead Catfish		One/month	Mercury, PCBs	
State Route 335, Omega, to mouth (Ohio River) (Pike, Scioto Counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Smallmouth Buffalo	One/month	PCBs	
	White Bass 12" and over	One/month	Mercury	
	Flathead Catfish	One/month	Mercury, PCBs	
	Channel Catfish,	One/month	PCBs	

2019 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Scioto River (Continued)		Common Carp		
Sevenmile Creek	U.S. Route 35, Eaton, to mouth (Four Mile Creek) (Butler County)	Rock Bass	One/month	Mercury
Shade River	All waters (Meigs County)	Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury
Sippo Lake	All waters (Stark County)	Black Crappie, Bluegill Sunfish, Common Carp, Largemouth Bass	Unrestricted	--
South Branch Portage River	Defiance Pike to mouth (Portage River) (Wood County)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
South Turkeyfoot Creek	All waters (Henry County)	Yellow Bullhead	Two/week	Mercury
St. Joseph Lake	All waters (Perry County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
St. Joseph River	All waters (Defiance, Williams Counties)	Channel Catfish	One/month	*Mercury, PCBs
		Rock Bass, Northern Pike	One/month	Mercury
St. Marys River	All waters (Auglaize, Mercer, Van Wert Counties)	Freshwater Drum, Largemouth Bass, Northern Pike, Saugeye	One/month	Mercury
Stillwater Creek	Piedmont lake to State Route 800 (Tuscarawas, Harrison, Belmont Counties)	Northern Pike, Saugeye	One/month	Mercury
Stillwater River	Brooks Road, Cosmos, to State Route 121, Needmore (Darke County)	Channel Catfish, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
	State Route 121, Needmore, to State Route 718, Pleasant Hill (Darke, Miami Counties)	Channel Catfish, Rock Bass 8" and over, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
	State Route 718, Pleasant Hill, to Turner Shoup Mill Road, Dayton (Miami, Montgomery Counties)	Channel Catfish, Largemouth Bass 13" and over, Rock Bass 8" and over, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
	Turner Shoup Mill Road, Dayton, to mouth (Great Miami River) (Montgomery County)	Channel Catfish, Largemouth Bass 13" and over, Rock Bass 8" and over, Smallmouth Bass, White Crappie	One/month	Mercury
Stonelick Lake	All waters (Clermont County)	Bluegill Sunfish, Channel Catfish	Two/week	Mercury
Sugar Creek	Beach City to Mouth (Tuscarawas County)	Bluegill Sunfish	Unrestricted	--

2019 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Summit Lake	All waters (Summit County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Swan Creek	Weckerley Road, Whitehouse, to mouth (Lake Erie) (Lucas County)	Yellow Perch	One/week	PCBs
		Common Carp	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
		Freshwater Drum, Northern Pike, Rock Bass	One/month	Mercury
Symmes Creek	State Route 141, Waterloo, to Ohio River (Gallia, Lawrence Counties)	Freshwater Drum, Sauger, Channel Catfish	One/month	Mercury
Tiffin River	All waters (Defiance, Fulton, Williams Counties)	Channel Catfish 20" and over, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Northern Pike 25" and over, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Tinkers Creek	East Idlewood Drive, near Twinsburg, to Cuyahoga River (Cuyahoga, Summit Counties)	Common Carp	One/month	Mercury
Toussaint Creek	U.S. 23 to mouth (Lake Erie) (Ottawa, Sandusky Counties)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Turkey Creek Lake	All waters (Scioto County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Tuscarawas River†	Arlington Road, Akron, to State Route 619, Barberton (Summit County)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
	State Route 619, Barberton, to Massillon (Stark, Summit Counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass, Yellowhead Bullhead	One/month	PCBs
		Northern Pike 25" and over	One/month	Mercury
	Massillon to State Route 416, New Philadelphia (Stark, Tuscarawas Counties)	Common Carp	<b>DO NOT EAT</b>	PCBs
		Channel Catfish	One/two months	PCBs
		Black Crappie, Rock Bass 9" and over, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Bullhead	One/month	PCBs
	State Route 416, New Philadelphia, to Township Road 62, Tuscarawas (Tuscarawas County)	Northern Pike 25" and over	One/month	Mercury
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish	One/month	PCBs
		Walleye	One/month	PCBs
Township Road 62, Tuscarawas, to State Route 751, Orange (Coshocton, Tuscarawas Counties)	Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish	One/month	PCBs	
	Freshwater Drum,	One/month	Mercury, PCBs	

## 2019 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Tuscarawas River† (Continued)	State Route 751, Orange, to mouth (Muskingum River) (Coshocton County)	Walleye	One/month	PCBs
		Channel Catfish, Common Carp, Flathead Catfish		
Twin Creek	U.S. Route 40, Lewisburg, to mouth (Great Miami River) (Montgomery, Preble, Warren Counties)	Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury, PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass 13" and over	One/month	Mercury
Tycoon Lake	All waters (Gallia County)	Black Crappie, Bluegill Sunfish, Channel Catfish	Two/week	Mercury
Tymochtee Creek	State Route 37, Marseilles, to mouth (Sandusky River) (Wyandot County)	Channel Catfish	One/month	Mercury
Vermilion River	All waters (Erie, Huron, Lorain, Richland Counties)	Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Veteran's Memorial Reservoir	All waters (Hancock County)	Saugeye	Unrestricted	--
		Largemouth Bass, White Crappie	Two/week	Mercury
		Common Carp	One/month	Mercury
Wakatomika Creek	All waters (Coshocton, Knox, Licking, Muskingum Counties)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Walborn Reservoir	All waters (Portage, Stark Counties)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Walhonding River	All waters (Coshocton County)	Freshwater Drum, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Walnut Creek (Scioto River tributary)	All waters (Fairfield, Franklin, Pickaway Counties)	Channel Catfish	One/month	PCBs
		Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
West Branch Black River	Parsons Road to mouth (Black River) (Lorain County)	Common Carp, Rock Bass, White Sucker	One/month	Mercury
West Branch Huron River	Monroeville at River Road to mouth (Huron River) (Erie, Huron Counties)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
West Branch Reservoir (Michael J. Kirwan Reservoir)	All waters (Portage County)	Largemouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
West Branch Rocky River	All waters (Cuyahoga, Medina Counties)	Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Wheeling Creek	State Route 9, Fairpoint, to mouth (Ohio River) (Belmont Count)	Smallmouth Bass	One/month	Mercury
Whitewater River	Indiana State Line to mouth (Great Miami River) (Hamilton County)	Channel Catfish, Freshwater Drum, Sauger, Smallmouth Bass,	One/month	Mercury

## 2019 Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Species	Meal Frequency	Contaminant
Whitewater River (Continued)		Smallmouth Buffalo		
		White Bass	One/month	PCBs
Wills Creek	All waters (Muskingum, Coshocton Counties)	Saugeye	One/month	Mercury
Wills Creek Reservoir	All waters (Muskingum County)	Channel Catfish	Two/week	Mercury
Wolf Creek	Gettysburg Road to mouth (Great Miami River) (Montgomery County)	Common Carp	One/month	PCBs
Yellow Creek	State Park Mooretown Road, Bravo, to mouth (Ohio River) (Jefferson County)	Freshwater Drum	One/month	Mercury

\*Chemical that drives the advisory.

†The Tuscarawas River had a one meal/month fish advisory due to hexachlorobenzene through 2005. Data collected in 2004 indicate that, although some hexachlorobenzene is still found in fish from the Tuscarawas River, the levels are not a threat to human health if one meal/week or less is consumed.

^The Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek had a DO NOT EAT fish advisory due to mirex through 2006. Data collected from 1998 through 2004 indicate that, although some mirex is still found in fish in the Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek, the levels are no longer high enough to require a no consumption advisory. All fish in Middle Fork Little Beaver Creek should be consumed no more than once a week, as some species still contain mirex.

PAHs = Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons

PCBs=Polychlorinated Biphenyls

### Do Not Wade or Swim in These Waters

The waters and/or sediments in these areas have high levels of contaminants. It is recommended that a person not swim or wade in these water body sections.

Body of Water	Area Under Advisory	Contaminant
Dicks Creek	River mile 4.1 (1 mile downstream from North Branch Dicks Creek), Middletown to the Great Miami River (Butler County)	PCBs
Little Scioto River	State Route 739, near Marion to Holland Road, near Marion (Marion County)	PAHs
Mahoning River	NW Bridge Road (Warren) to Pennsylvania State Line (Mahoning, Trumbull counties)	PAHs, PCBs

PAHs = Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons  
PCBs = Polychlorinated Biphenyls

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What health benefits do I get from eating Ohio sport fish?

There are many benefits to including fish (including both fish and shellfish) in a balanced diet for people of all ages. Fish are high in protein, low in fat, and contain healthy oils called omega-3 fatty acids which are important during fetal development and which help prevent heart disease in adults. For more information on eating fish, visit the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's page on fish recommendations: [www.FDA.gov/fishadvice](http://www.FDA.gov/fishadvice)

Additionally, fishing can be a rewarding hobby that brings people closer to nature, provides a source of natural food, and can even help with wildlife conservation. For more information on fishing in Ohio, visit the Ohio Department of Natural Resource's Fishing Basics page: <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/fishing/fishing-basics>

### What is a fish consumption advisory and why is it needed?

A fish consumption advisory is a recommendation to help people eating Ohio-caught fish make educated choices about: where to fish, what types of fish to eat, how to determine the amount and frequency of fish you consume, and how to prepare fish for cooking.

While most Ohio sport fish are safe to eat, low levels of harmful chemicals like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and mercury have been found in some fish from certain Ohio waters. To protect the health of anyone who eats Ohio-caught fish, the Ohio Department of Health offers an advisory for how often these fish can be safely eaten. A consumption advisory is a recommendation meant to protect people eating Ohio-caught fish and should not be viewed as law or regulation.

Fish consumption advisories are designed to protect the most at-risk (vulnerable) members of the population, especially infants, children, and women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or planning to become pregnant. This will also ensure that people who are less at-risk will be protected.

### What contaminants are in Ohio sport fish?

**Not all fish are contaminated.** Contaminants that are found in some Ohio fish include polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides, and metals like lead and methyl mercury. The contaminants responsible for most advisories are PCBs and methyl mercury.

PCBs are man-made oils that were once used to make copying paper and electrical equipment. PCBs break down very slowly in the environment and build up in fish through the food chain.

Mercury is a metal that occurs in nature. Natural sources of mercury include volcanoes and forest fires, but it can also enter the environment through human activities like coal-burning power plants. Methyl mercury is a mercury compound that builds up in fish through the food chain.

### How do methyl mercury and PCBs affect human health?

The levels of methyl mercury and PCBs found in Ohio fish are not known to cause immediate sickness in



humans.

Over time, methyl mercury and PCBs can build up in a person's body. It may take months or years of regularly eating contaminated fish to build up amounts of contaminants that are a health concern. It takes up to six years for the body to get rid of PCBs, and up to one year to get rid of mercury after a person stops eating contaminated fish.

Health problems that may result from the contaminants in fish include birth defects (including developmental and physical deficits) in newborns of mothers who eat highly contaminated fish for many years before becoming pregnant. Mercury has been known to cause heart problems in older adults and can cause problems with the brain and nerves.

### **Who is most at risk of health problems from fish contaminants?**

Contaminants in fish can be harmful to people of all ages, but fetuses, infants, and children through age 15 are most at-risk because their bodies and organs are still developing. They are less able to deal with toxic substances than an adult.

Women who plan to become pregnant, women who are pregnant and nursing mothers should be aware of fish contaminants as it may affect their babies. Women of childbearing age and pregnant or nursing mothers should consult with their doctors on how to make fish a part of their diet.

### **Why does Ohio have an advisory to only eat one meal of sport fish a week?**

Fish taken from rivers, streams, lakes, and reservoirs throughout Ohio often have small amounts of chemical contaminants. Limiting the number of sport fish meals eaten ensures that the contaminants do not build up in your body to levels that may be harmful. Data collected from lakes and rivers in Ohio show a statewide advisory of one meal per week of most Ohio sport fish is protective.

### **How much fish is a meal?**

For an adult, Ohio recommends that an adult should eat 4 to 6 ounces of cooked fish per meal. Serving sizes for children should be smaller and adjusted for their age and size. Ohio recommends that a child should eat 2 to 3 ounces of cooked fish per meal. For more information on a meal size, see "**Serving Size**" on page 6.

Based on mercury contamination, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends that one meal (also called a serving) should be 4 ounces for adults. For children 7 years old and younger, the FDA advises that serving sizes for children should be smaller and adjusted for their age and size, about 2 ounces. For more information, visit <https://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm393070.htm>

### **Should I stop eating fish?**

The Ohio Department of Health is not recommending that you stop eating sport fish **EXCEPT** where there is a Do Not Eat advisory. Fish with low levels of contaminants are safe to eat, provided the trimming, cooking and meal frequency advice is followed. The maximum recommended frequencies for eating those fish are included in the advisory table.

### **Is fish from grocery stores and restaurants safe to eat?**

Although the Ohio Sport Fish Advisory is mainly focused on sport fish caught in Ohio waters, the Ohio Department of Health encourages adding a wide variety of fish to your diet and understands that even people who fish will often add store- or restaurant-bought fish to their diet. Most kinds of fish on the market, including fish from restaurants and grocery stores, are safe to eat and low in contaminants. For more information on which fish to eat, visit the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's page on fish recommendations: [www.FDA.gov/fishadvice](http://www.FDA.gov/fishadvice)

To find food product recalls involving food regulated by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, including recalls on fish and seafood, use the Ohio Department of Health's Food Recalls search tool: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/food-safety-program/food-recalls>

### **I ate a serving of fish which the advisory recommends only eating once per month due to PCBs contamination. Can I also eat a serving of a different kind of fish which the advisory recommends eating only once per month due to mercury contamination?**

Yes. PCBs and mercury affect different body processes, so it is considered safe to eat a serving fish that has an advisory due to PCBs as well as a serving of fish that has an advisory due to mercury.

However, you should not regularly eat two servings of fish in a month if they both have a recommendation to only eat them once per month due to the same contaminant. For example, if you catch a catfish which the advisory recommends only eating once per month due to mercury and you eat one serving of it, then you should not eat another serving of that fish during that month. You should also not eat a serving of any other kind of fish that month that has a once per month advisory due to mercury.

### **What should I do if I eat more than the recommended amount of fish and shellfish in a week?**

The levels of contaminants found in Ohio fish are not known to cause immediate sickness in humans. Over time, contaminants can build up in a person's body. It may take months or years of regularly eating contaminated fish to build up amounts of contaminants that are a health concern. One week of eating too much fish or shellfish is not likely to cause noticeable health problems.

If you eat too much fish or shellfish in one week, the Ohio Department of Health advises that you reduce the amount you eat during the following week. For example, the recommendation is that adults should eat no more than 4 ounces of Ohio sport fish per week. If you eat 8 ounces of Ohio sport fish in one week, then you should eat none the following week. If you eat 12 ounces of Ohio sport fish in one week, then you should eat none for the following two weeks, and so on.

### **Has the lake or stream where I like to fish been sampled for contaminated fish?**

All lakes that have fish with higher levels of contaminants are listed in the Ohio Sport Fish Consumption Advisory booklet. If you don't see the public lake where you fish in the booklet, then you may safely consume the fish you catch from the lake according to the general advisory.

### **What contaminants are looked for to determine if an advisory is needed?**

Ohio's fish samples are analyzed for several contaminants, most importantly mercury and PCBs which are responsible for the majority of fish consumption advisories. Samples are also tested for:

- Metals (arsenic, cadmium, lead, selenium)
- Pesticides (aldrin, dieldrin, lindane, DDT and its breakdown products, endrin, endosulfan, heptachlor, methoxychlor, hexachlorobenzene, mirex, and nonachlor)

### **The water where I fish seems dirty, but the fish have been sampled and there is no advisory. Why isn't there an advisory?**

You cannot tell if a fish advisory is needed by whether a body of water looks or smells dirty.

Because the contaminant levels that Ohio EPA looks for when it samples fish are so small, you cannot see, smell, or taste them in the water or fish. A body of water and its fish can look clean but actually be contaminated and require an advisory.

On the other hand, a body of water can look dirty for reasons other than contaminants like PCBs and mercury. Bacteria and algae (microscopic plants) can cause the water to look discolored, murky, or muddy, or cause a bad odor. Recent heavy rains can stir up sediment and cause water to look cloudy or brown. Even if this is the case, a fish advisory may not be needed.

### **How else can I reduce my health risk from contaminants in Ohio sport fish?**

Choose smaller fish (within the legal size limit). Smaller fish within a species tend to have fewer contaminants than older, larger fish.

Choose leaner fish. Fish that are higher in fat (channel catfish and carp, for example) will likely have more fat where PCBs and other chemicals build up. Yellow perch, sunfish, and crappies are examples of lean fish.

Trim and cook your fish properly to reduce your risk. When preparing whole fish, trim off the skin and fat to reduce contaminants. Cook and eat only the fillet. Baking, broiling, or grilling the fish can cook off PCBs, and these methods won't add extra unhealthy fats as with frying.

## Contact Us

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