

Health Advisories for Eating Fish

Every year, Iowa DNR biologists collect tissue samples of fish for laboratory analyses. Results of these analyses show that most fish are safe to eat even though trace amounts of chemicals may be present in fish tissue. Mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are the chemicals most likely to accumulate in fish and exceed Iowa's risk-based advisory levels that were developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Fish consumption advisories are issued wherever it is confirmed that Iowa's advisory levels are exceeded. Consumption advisories usually focus on predator and bottom-feeding species. Panfish (crappie, Bluegill, Yellow Perch) are generally safe to eat with almost no risk.

In 2019, the U.S. Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) updated the fish consumption advice for pregnant and nursing women, those planning to become pregnant and young children to limit mercury in their diets (see www.fda.gov/food/consumers/advice-about-eating-fish). For fish caught in Iowa, the people listed above should limit their consumption to one meal per week of all larger size predator fish (e.g., Walleye and bass). Predator fish are more likely to have higher concentrations of mercury; however, consumption of panfish by these higher risk individuals is considered safe unless otherwise posted.

Find the most up to date list of consumption advisories at www.iowadnr.gov/fishtissue. New advisories are issued and existing advisories are removed, based on results of annual fish contaminant monitoring in Iowa.

Safe Eating Guidelines

Sensitive population only: pregnant and nursing women, those planning to become pregnant and young children should not eat more than 1 meal/week of, Advisory contaminant
Lake or River Reach (County)

Largemouth Bass, Mercury
Chatfield Lake (Lee), **Grade Lake** (Clarke), **Lake Geode** (Henry), **Lake Iowa** (Iowa), **Lake Keomah** (Mahaska), **Lake Miami** (Monroe), **Lake Wapello** (Davis), **Little River Lake** (Decatur) **Mormon Trail Lake** (Adair), **Nine Eagles Lake** (Decatur), **North Banner Lake** (Warren), **Pollmiller Park Lake** (Lee), **Red Haw Lake** (Lucas), **South Banner Lake** (Warren), **Upper Centerville Reservoir** (Appanoose), **Yellow Smoke Lake** (Crawford)

Snapping Turtle, Mercury
Pollmiller Park Lake (Lee)

Any Predator Fish, Mercury
Cedar River from HWY 218 bridge at Floyd (Floyd) to the IA/MN state line (Mitchell), **Iowa River** from the upper end of Coralville Reservoir near Swisher (Johnson) to the dam in Iowa Falls (Hardin); **Shell Rock River** from the West Fork Cedar River confluence near Cedar Falls (Black Hawk) to the Winnebago River confluence near Rockford (Floyd); **Turkey River** from Mississippi River confluence near Millville (Clayton) to the Volga River confluence near Garber (Clayton); and **West Fork Des Moines River** from the East Fork Des Moines River confluence near Dakota City (Humboldt) to HWY15 south of West Bend (Humboldt/Pocahontas)

Any Fish, Mercury
Upper Iowa River from the Mississippi River confluence near New Albin (Allamakee) to the IA/MN state line (Howard)

Smallmouth Bass, Mercury
Volga River from Volga (Clayton) to its headwaters near Hawkeye (Fayette) including the **Little Volga** and **North Branch Volga Rivers**

Walleye, Mercury
Wapsipinicon River from County Road D16 at Littleton (Buchanan) to Independence Mill Dam (Buchanan)

Entire population should not eat more than 1 meal/week of, Advisory contaminant
Lake or River Reach (County)

Channel Catfish, PCBs
McKinley Lake (Union)

Common Carp over 20 inches in length, PCBs
Mississippi River (Scott), Pool 15 at Davenport