



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Office of Public Affairs

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For release: Immediate  
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## Mercury, PCB Contamination Found in Largemouth Bass in Lake Wylie

RALEIGH — The N.C. Division of Public Health has issued a fish consumption advisory for largemouth bass caught in Lake Wylie, located in Gaston and Mecklenburg counties.

Elevated levels of PCBs have been found in largemouth bass caught in Lake Wylie. In addition, previous studies have shown that largemouth bass in all waters of North Carolina have elevated levels of mercury. As a result, the N.C. Division of Public Health (NCDPH) is issuing a fish consumption advisory for Lake Wylie. Women of childbearing age (15 to 44 years), pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children under age 15 should not eat any largemouth bass caught in Lake Wylie. To guard against mercury exposure and PCB exposure, NCDPH recommends that all other people should not eat more than two meals a month of largemouth bass from Lake Wylie. A meal is considered approximately 6 ounces of uncooked fish for adults, or 2 ounces of uncooked fish for children under 15.

PCBs may adversely impact the neurological development of children, the reproductive system, the immune system and may cause cancer. Mercury mostly affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, especially in unborn babies and young children. Prenatal mercury exposure can affect the way children think, learn and problem-solve later in life. Adverse health effects also can occur in adults at much higher doses.

The PCB and mercury contamination in the fish does not present a known health risk for people engaging in other recreational activities such as touching the water, wading, swimming, boating or handling the fish. More information on the new health advice and related issues is on the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services' Fish Consumption Advisories website at [www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/fish](http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/fish), or call the N.C. Division of Public Health at 919-707-5900.

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Location: 101 Blair Drive • Adams Building • Raleigh, N.C. 27603

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