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Kansas Issues Fish Consumption Advisories for 2020

TOPEKA, Kan. -- The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) are issuing fish consumption advisories for 2020. The advisories identify types of fish or other aquatic animals that should be eaten in limited quantities or, in some cases, avoided altogether because of contamination. General advice and Internet resources are also provided to aid the public in making informed decisions regarding the benefits as well as the risks associated with eating locally caught fish from Kansas waters.

Definitions:

Bottom-feeding fish: buffalos, carp, carpsuckers, bullhead and channel catfish, sturgeons and suckers.

Predatory fish: blue catfish, crappies, drum, flathead catfish, largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass, perches, sunfish, white bass, wiper, striper, walleye, saugeye and sauger.

Shellfish: mussels, clams and crayfish.

Serving size (skinless fish fillets before cooking):

Adults and Children age 13 and older = 8 ounces

Children age 6 to 12 = 4 ounces

Children younger than 6 = 2 ounces

Statewide advice for consuming locally-caught fish because of Mercury

The eating guideline tables below contain recommended consumption limits (based on mercury levels) for different kinds of fish and sizes (given in inches) caught in Kansas. The limits are protective of sensitive populations which includes **women who are pregnant, nursing, or may become pregnant and children younger than 17 years old**. Kansas encourages anyone who regularly consumes fish to carefully consider the types and amounts they eat, including store-bought fish. For specific questions or concerns about mercury in Kansas fish please contact KDHE. For information about fish caught in other states, store-bought fish and other seafood please visit (<https://www.epa.gov/choose-fish-and-shellfish-wisely>). By making informed choices

consumers can enjoy the health benefits associated with eating fish without ingesting unhealthy amounts of mercury.

***Eating Guideline Charts**

Bottom-Feeding Fish	Size/Inches	Servings/Month
Bullheads	All Sizes	4
Channel Catfish	< 20	8
	> 20	4
Common Carp	All Sizes	6

Predatory Fish	Size/Inches	Servings/Month
Crappie	All Sizes	8
Flathead Catfish	< 20	4
	> 20	2
Freshwater Drum	All Sizes	4
Largemouth, Smallmouth and Spotted Bass	All Sizes	2
Sunfish (Bluegill, Green, Redear, etc.)	All Sizes	4
White Bass, White Perch, Wiper, Stripped Bass	< 20	8
	> 20	4
Walleye, Sauger, Saugeye	< 20	8
	> 20	4

*KDHE and KDWPT will provide advice for other commonly-eaten fish such as buffaloes, blue catfish, and suckers as more data become available. **For species not listed Kansas recommends a limit of 4 servings per month.**

How to Use the Eating Guideline Charts

Example: Crappie have a recommended limit of 8 servings per month. Within a months' time, if you eat 4 servings of crappie, then eat no more than ½ the recommended monthly limit of any other type of fish.

Type of Fish	Number of Servings	Proportion of Monthly Limit
Crappie	4	1/2
Channel Catfish > 20 inches	2	1/2

Waterbody specific advisories for all consumers

Kansas recommends restricting consumption of bottom-feeding fish and catfishes to 4 servings per month from the following location because of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs):

1. **Cow Creek** in Hutchinson and downstream to the confluence with the Arkansas River (Reno County);
2. **The Kansas River** from Lawrence (below Bowersock Dam) downstream to Eudora at the confluence of the Wakarusa River (Douglas and Leavenworth counties);
3. **The Little Arkansas River** from the Main Street Bridge immediately west of Valley Center to the confluence with the Arkansas River in Wichita (Sedgwick County).

Kansas recommends restricting consumption of bottom-feeding fish and catfishes to 1 serving per month from the following location because of PCBs:

1. **K-96 Lake** in Wichita (Sedgwick County).

Kansas recommends not eating specified fish or aquatic life from the following locations:

1. **The Arkansas River** from the Lincoln Street dam in Wichita downstream to the confluence with Cowskin Creek near Belle Plaine (Sedgwick and Sumner counties); bottom-feeding fish and catfishes because of PCBs.
2. **Shoal Creek** from the Missouri/Kansas border to Empire Lake (Cherokee County); shellfish because of lead and cadmium.
3. **The Spring River** from the confluence of Center Creek to the Kansas/Oklahoma border (Cherokee County); shellfish because of lead and cadmium.
4. **Antioch Park Lake South** in Antioch Park, Overland Park (Johnson County); all fish because of the pesticides dieldrin, heptachlor epoxide, chlordane, and dichlorophenyltrichloroethanes (DDTs).
5. **Arkalon Park Lakes** in Liberal (Seward County) – Kansas recommends not eating fish or other aquatic life because the lakes are sustained solely by treated municipal wastewater.

General advice for eating locally caught fish in Kansas

1. Sensitive populations should consider restricting their total mercury intake for both supermarket fish and locally caught species. Concerned parents and other persons may wish to consult with a physician about eating fish and mercury exposure.
2. Mercury exposure can be reduced by limiting the consumption of large predatory fish. Larger/older fish of all types are more likely to have higher concentrations of mercury.
3. Avoid the consumption of fish parts other than fillets, especially when eating bottom-feeding fish and catfishes. Fatty internal organs tend to accumulate higher levels of fat-soluble contaminants such as chlordane and PCBs than fillets.
4. Consumers can reduce their ingestion of fat-soluble contaminants such as chlordane and PCBs by trimming fat from fillets, and cooking in a manner in which fat drips away from the fillet.
5. Avoid subsistence level (relying on wild-caught fish for daily nutritional needs) fishing activities in large rivers within or immediately downstream of large urban/industrial areas and wastewater outfalls. Fish in these areas are more likely to contain traces of chemical contaminants.
6. Kansas recommends not eating fish or aquatic life from surface waters sustained solely by municipal or industrial wastewater because of unknown, yet potentially present pathogens, metals, organic chemicals or other emerging contaminants. This advisory includes consumption of any aquatic life present in wastewater outfalls, waste treatment lagoons or stormwater detention ponds.
7. In waterbodies where watches or warnings related to harmful algae blooms have been applied, fish should be consumed in moderation and care taken to only consume skinless fillets. Avoid cutting into internal organs and rinse fillets with clean water prior to cooking or freezing.

Internet resources from KDHE, KDWPT, EPA, FDA and the American Heart Association

To view the advisories online and for information about KDHE's Fish Tissue Contaminant Monitoring Program please visit our website at: www.kdheks.gov/befs/fish_tissue_monitoring.htm

For information about harmful algal blooms, including current watches and warnings, visit this KDHE website: www.kdheks.gov/algae-illness/index.htm

For information about fishing in Kansas including licensing, regulations, fishing reports and fishing forecasts please visit the KDWPT fishing website: <http://ksoutdoors.com/Fishing>

For general information about mercury in fish, national advisories, and advisories in other states please visit this EPA website: <http://www2.epa.gov/choose-fish-and-shellfish-wisely>

For information about the health benefits vs. the risks of including fish in your diet please visit this American Heart Association website: www.heart.org/en/news/2018/05/25/eating-fish-twice-a-week-reduces-heart-stroke-risk

For technical information regarding the EPA risk assessment methods used to determine advisory consumption limits please visit: <http://www2.epa.gov/fish-tech>

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As the state's environmental protection and public health agency, KDHE promotes responsible choices to protect the health and environment for all Kansans.