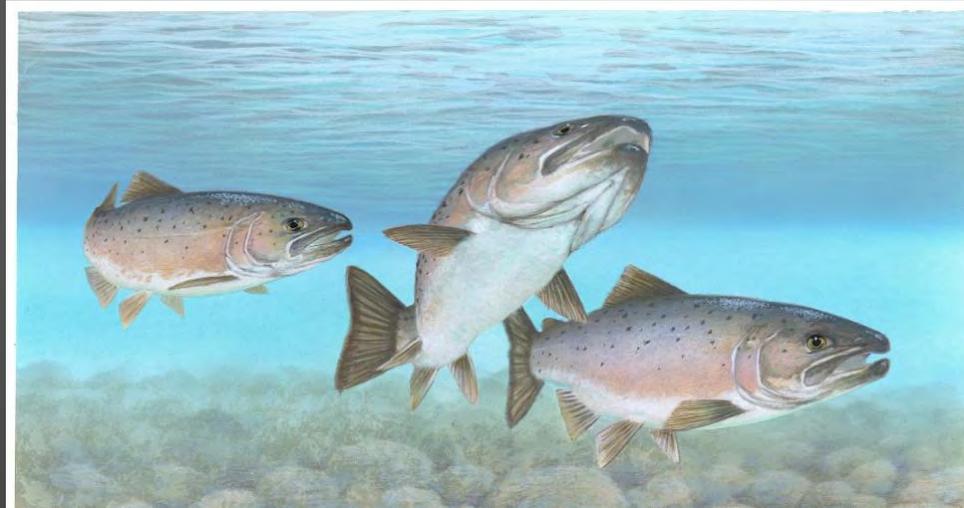


# Safe Eating Guidelines in California



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# Objectives for Today

- ▶ Provide background on OEHHA's fish advisory program
- ▶ Highlight importance of monitoring data
- ▶ Review communication efforts & challenges
  - Gather feedback, ideas, monitoring partners



# OEHHA and Fish Advisories

- ▶ OEHHA is responsible for evaluating risks from eating sport California fish and issuing advice to protect health
  - Fish may be contaminated by chemicals
- ▶ Non-regulatory – advisories provide recommendations and information
- ▶ Advisories/SEGs/Consumption Guidelines
  - All provide recommendations on how frequently people can eat fish from a water body

# Why Have Fish Advisories

- ◉ Chemicals in fish with possible harmful health effects
  - Mercury and PCBs
- ◉ Long time frame to clean up
  - Legacy chemicals persist in environment
  - Responsibility of Water Board
- ◉ Eating fish offers health benefits

# How OEHHA Develops Fish Advisories

- ▶ Based on results of testing fish samples for certain chemicals
- ▶ Need results from enough samples to represent species and water body
- ▶ *No state program to sample for advisories*



# Where do data come from if there is no monitoring program?

- ▶ State Water Resources Control Board
  - Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program
- ▶ Regional Monitoring Program (San Francisco Bay)
- ▶ Department of Water Resources
- ▶ U.S. EPA
- ▶ U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

# How OEHHA Develops Advice

- ▶ OEHHA determines how much fish can be safely eaten using level of contamination and advisory tissue levels (ATLs)
- ▶ ATLs based on studies of health effects
  - Keep exposure at or below a safe exposure level
  - Balance risk and benefits
- ▶ Advice issued for each species in water body with adequate data
  - Advisories are based on a series of servings per week (0, 1, 2, 3 – 7)

# OEHHA Advisories

- ▶ 53 water bodies plus advice for 5 anadromous species
  - Lakes: 33
  - Rivers & creeks: 13
  - Bays & coastline
    - San Francisco, Tomales, Santa Monica & San Pedro
  - Delta (3 segments)
  - Shad, Chinook salmon, steelhead, striped bass, sturgeon

# Data for more Advisories?

- ▶ More than 9000 lakes:
  - OEHHA compiled data for 273 without advisories
    - 7 have adequate data to develop advice
    - Rest have data gaps: missing species or bad sample size
- ▶ Locating and validating data is time consuming
  - Not centralized or complete
    - CEDEN – Good concept
      - Missing data, missing information, inconsistent
  - Different agencies hold data
    - Lake Oroville area – established good link with DWR
    - Upper Feather River – PG&E no link
  - Analytes, methods & QA/QC vary

# More OEHHA Advisories!

- ▶ Just completed
  - Lake Oroville
  - Lake McClure
  - Lake McSwain
- ▶ In review
  - Statewide advice for lakes with no advisory
  - Pyramid Lake
- ▶ Future – more lakes, bays, and coastline
  - Balance of water bodies with lower contamination and those with higher contamination

# Communication



- Fish filleting demonstration
- Presentations and trainings on advisories

# Communicating Advice

- ⦿ Balance health risks and benefits
- ⦿ Emphasize importance of eating fish
- ⦿ Advisory reports, fact sheets, single page pictorial advisories & kiosk versions
- ⦿ Develop easy-to-read brochures
  - Learn safer and less safe options (fish species and water bodies)
  - Compare your consumption to recommendations

# Web Communication

- [www.oehha.ca.gov](http://www.oehha.ca.gov) (Click on “Fish”)
- List of advisories with links
- Google map showing advisories
  - Direct link to advice
- How to Follow Advisories
- Information on chemicals
- Information for women and children

# Google map showing Advisories

http://www.oehha.ca.gov/fish/so\_cal/donner.html

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This Site California

Home Air Children's Health Ecotoxicology Emergency Fish Pesticides Proposition 65 Risk Assessment Water

Alternate Languages Chemicals Fish Advisories Women & Children Pescado Reports Links

Home -> Fish -> OEHA Fish Advisories -> Donner Lake

## FISH RESOURCE LINKS

- USEPA/FDA Recommendations for Fish Consumption
- USEPA/FDA Commercial Fish Advice
- Department of Fish and Game Sport Fish Regulation Books
- Department of Public Health Fish Information
- Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Fish Mercury Project
- Southern California Fish Contamination Education Collaborative

## LISTSERVS

- OEHA Listserv
- Biomonitoring Listserv
- Fish Listserv
- Northern California Spill Alert
- Prop. 65 Listserv
- Southern California Spill Alerts

## CONTACT OEHA

- Help
- Contact OEHA Staff

## FISH

### SAFE EATING GUIDELINES FOR DONNER LAKE [UPDATED 06/09/11] BASED ON MERCURY OR PCBs

 rainbow trout ♥	 brown trout ♥	
 kokanee ♥	 lake trout ♥	
Kokanee - 2 servings per week OR Trout - 4 servings per week for women 18-45 and children 1-17 Trout - 7 servings a week for men or women over 45 OR	1 Serving a week from this group	There are no fish with high levels of chemicals

♥ = high in Omega-3s and you can eat them at least once a week  
Eating fish with omega-3s can lower heart disease in adults and help babies' brains to develop.

**What is a serving?**

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



For Adults For Children

- Follow this link to view or download a pictorial version of the advice in English
- Follow this link to view or download a pictorial version of the advice in Spanish

## OEHA FISH LINKS

- OEHA's Fish Advisories
  - How to Follow Advisories
- Advice for Fish You Buy
- Women & Children
  - Alternate Languages
  - Pescado
- Chemicals in Fish
  - DDTs
  - Dieldrin
  - Mercury
  - PCBs
- Advisory Map
- Reports
  - Angler Survey
  - Fish Consumption
  - Advisory Tissue Levels
- Oil Spill Information
- Links

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# Language of Communication

- Tried to make documents and fact sheets simpler and easier to understand
  - Pictorial advice
- Conflict between simple wording and risk assessment language
  - Completely safe does not exist in risk assessment
  - “Safe” and “Safe Eating Guidelines” are not used in recent advisories
- Feedback on wording and pictorial advice
  - Informal comments
  - Formal survey or focus group testing



**It is good  
for people to eat fish!**

Health benefits outweigh risks *if*  
choose fish low in mercury

# Advisory Information

- ▶ [www.oehha.ca.gov](http://www.oehha.ca.gov) (Click on “Fish”)
- ▶ Bob Brodberg in Sacramento  
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