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For immediate release

WVDHHR announces updated sport fish consumption advisories for 2011

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources has updated the West Virginia Sport Fish Consumption Advisory for 2011. DHHR partners with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources to develop consumption advisories for fish caught in West Virginia.

Fish consumption advisories are updated each year to help West Virginia anglers and their families make educated choices about eating the fish they catch.

More information on the fish consumption advisories is available online at www.wvdhhr.org/fish or the 2011 Division of Natural Resources fishing regulations at http://www.wvdnr.gov/fishing/Regs11/2011_Fishing_Regs.pdf. A paper copy of the 2011 advisory may be obtained upon request from the Office of Environmental Health Services by calling 304-558-2981.

The 2011 advisory is the result of reviewing recent fish tissue data and re-analysis of historical data. The following changes to the 2011 advisory are as follows:

- Fish Creek - Advisory limiting consumption of smallmouth bass (less than twelve inches) for one meal a month has been changed to all sizes due to new information indicating higher mercury levels.
- Potomac River and the North Branch of the Potomac - Advisories for all nongame fish have been removed due to new information indicating lower dioxin levels. The 2011 statewide consumption advisories should be followed.

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- Shenandoah River - Advisory for channel catfish (greater than seventeen inches) has changed from do not eat to one meal a month due to new information indicating lower polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) levels.
- Shenandoah River – Advisory for smallmouth bass (all sizes) at one meal a month has been added due to new information indicating an increase in mercury levels.
- South Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac – Advisory for smallmouth bass (less than twelve inches) at one meal a month has been dropped due to new information indicating lower mercury levels. The 2011 statewide consumption advisory for smallmouth bass should be followed.
- Summersville Lake - Advisory for walleye (all sizes) for six meals per year has been changed to one meal a month due to new information indicating lower mercury levels.

Low levels of chemicals like PCBs, mercury, selenium and dioxin have been found in some fish from certain waters. An advisory is advice and should not be viewed as law or regulation. It is intended to help anglers and their families decide: where to fish, what types of fish to eat, how to limit the amount and frequency of fish eaten and how to prepare and cook fish to reduce contaminants.

Women of childbearing age, children and people who regularly eat fish are particularly susceptible to contaminants that build up over time. Individuals falling into one of these categories should be especially careful to follow the guidelines.

This advisory covers only sport fish caught in West Virginia waters. Safety regulations and advisories for fish in the marketplace are the responsibility of the United States Food and Drug Administration. For more information you can contact the FDA at <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/Product-SpecificInformation/Seafood/FoodbornePathogensContaminants/Methylmercury/ucm115662.htm>