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DHHR Announces 2014 Sport Fishing Advisories

Includes Changes for Greenbrier River, Shenandoah River, Summersville Lake, and Ohio River

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources today announced an updated West Virginia Sport Fish Consumption Advisory for 2014. The 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.

Changes to the current advisory are as follows:

- Greenbrier River – Specific advisory limiting consumption for Smallmouth Bass less than twelve (12) inches in length for one (1) meal a month has been removed due to newer information indicating lower levels of mercury. The 2014 statewide consumption advisory for Smallmouth Bass should be followed <http://www.wvdhhr.org/fish/>
- Shenandoah River – Specific advisory limiting consumption for Smallmouth Bass, greater than twelve (12) inches in length for one (1) meal a month has been adjusted to include all sizes due to newer information indicating higher levels of mercury in Smallmouth Bass smaller than twelve (12) inches in length.
- Summersville Lake – Specific advisory limiting consumption of Walleye greater than seventeen (17) inches in length for six (6) meals per year has been removed due to newer information indicating lower levels of mercury. Consumption advice for Walleye of all sizes should be limited to one (1) meal a month.
- Ohio River – Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) advisory for Striped Bass Hybrid for one (1) meal a month has been revised to six (6) meals per year due to newer information indicating increased Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) levels from the Pennsylvania border to Belleville Lock (Brooke, Hancock, Marshall, Ohio, Pleasants, Tyler, Wetzel, and Wood counties). Ohio River advisories are now based on data from ORSANCO and utilize an advisory protocol developed by the Ohio River Fish Consumption Advisory Workgroup. The protocol ensures uniform advisories among Ohio River states for all river sections. For more detail on Ohio River advisory updates, see: <http://216.68.102.178/comm/fishconsumption/default.asp>.

The 2014 advisories may be reviewed at <http://www.wvdhhr.org/fish/>, obtained from DHHR, or found in the 2014 DNR fishing regulations.

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 (FDA). For more information you may contact the FDA at <http://www.fda.gov/food/resourcesforyou/consumers/ucm110591.htm>.

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