

January 22, 2009

DSHS Issues Fish Advisory for Lake Madisonville

The Texas Department of State Health Services has issued an advisory warning people to limit their consumption of largemouth bass from Lake Madisonville.

The advisory was issued after laboratory testing showed elevated levels of mercury in the species. No other species of fish from the lake are included in the warning.

Adults should limit consumption of largemouth bass to no more than two 8-ounce servings per month. Children under 12 years old should limit consumption to no more than two 4-ounce servings per month. Women who are nursing, pregnant or who may become pregnant should not consume largemouth bass from Lake Madisonville.

Regular ingestion of methylmercury, the mercury compound in the fish, can harm the human brain and nervous system. Young children are especially at risk. The brain and nervous system in a developing fetus can be permanently damaged if the mother-to-be eats foods containing elevated levels of mercury during pregnancy.

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that gets into air and water from the weathering of the earth's crust, from the burning of fossil fuels and from some industrial discharges and emissions.

There is no risk of mercury poisoning from fishing, skiing or swimming in Lake Madisonville.

Lake Madisonville is in the city of Madisonville, Madison County, in central East Texas.