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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Michigan releases 2022 Eat Safe Fish Guides to help residents learn about and plan for local fish consumption

Updates include a 'Do Not Eat' fish advisory for bluegill and sunfish in parts of Rouge River and lifting of 'Do Not Eat' fish advisory for parts of Huron River

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has released the [2022 regional Eat Safe Fish Guides](#). These guides can help Michiganders plan their fish consumption to minimize exposure to chemicals that can build up in fish, while still getting all the health benefits of eating fish.

The regional *Eat Safe Fish Guides* provide guidelines for eating locally caught fish. Guidelines are based on levels of chemicals found in the portions of fish that people eat – typically the filets. Test results from the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories are used to determine what is safe for people to eat over the long-term. There are many health benefits to eating fish and the *Eat Safe Fish Guides* help individuals choose the fish that are best for them and their families.

One update to the [Eat Safe Fish Southeast Michigan Regional Guide](#) is a 'Do Not Eat' advisory for bluegill and sunfish caught in the Lower Branch of the Rouge River and the Main Branch of the Rouge River from the Ford Estate Dam to the Detroit River. Bluegill and sunfish were collected from these parts of the river in 2021 and analyzed for harmful contaminants. Due to high levels of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), a type of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS), MDHHS recommends that people avoid eating bluegill and sunfish from this stretch of the Rouge River.

Other species of fish collected in 2019 and 2021 from this same stretch of the river were found to be contaminated with PFOS, but not at levels that call for a 'Do Not Eat' advisory. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy is continuing to investigate possible sources of this PFOS contamination. There is also historical PCB contamination for this stretch of the river. Consumption guidelines for all other species of fish in this stretch of the Rouge River can be found in the *Eat Safe Fish Southeast Michigan Regional Guide*.

Another update includes the lifting of the 'Do Not Eat' fish advisory for most fish species from a specific stretch of the Huron River due to recent fish filet data. The advisory is lifted for the stretch of the Huron River from where it crosses I-275 in Wayne County to the river mouth at Lake Erie, including the Flat Rock impoundment.

Although the 'Do Not Eat' fish advisory has been lifted for most fish species from this stretch of the Huron River, fish consumption guidelines are still in place for the following species:

- Bluegill and sunfish have a recommended eight MI Servings per month due to PFOS.
- Carp have a recommended 'Limited' category for fish less than 28" and a recommended 'Do Not Eat' category for fish greater than 28" due to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxins. Fish with a 'Limited' category should not be eaten by people under the age of 15, those who have health problems like cancer or diabetes, those who may have children in the next several years, those who are pregnant or those who are breastfeeding. People who do not fall under any of those categories are recommended to limit their consumption to one to two servings each year.
- Catfish have a recommended one MI Serving per month due to PCBs.
- Largemouth and smallmouth bass have a recommended four MI Servings per month due to PCBs and mercury.
- Rock bass still have a recommended 'Do Not Eat' advisory due to PFOS.
- For other fish species, refer to the statewide guidelines.

The 'Do Not Eat' fish advisory remains in effect for the Huron River from where the river crosses N. Wixom Road in Oakland County to where the river crosses I-275. This includes: Norton Creek (Oakland County), Hubbell Pond also known as Mill Pond (Oakland County), Kent Lake (Oakland County), Ore Lake (Livingston County), Strawberry & Zukey Lakes (Livingston County), Gallagher Lake (Livingston County), Loon Lake (Livingston County), Whitewood Lakes (Livingston County), Base Line & Portage Lakes (Livingston/Washtenaw County line), Barton Pond (Washtenaw County), Geddes Pond (Washtenaw County), Argo Pond (Washtenaw County), Ford Lake (Washtenaw County), and Belleville Lake (Wayne County).

Unlike the Michigan Department of Natural Resource's *Michigan Fishing Guide*, the MDHHS *Eat Safe Fish guidelines* are not laws or regulations, and no one is required to follow them. Instead, the guides are a free resource for those who would like information about which fish, and how much of those fish, are healthy to eat from various bodies of water across the state.

Chemicals in fish are a worldwide problem that is not limited to Michigan and other Great Lakes states. The chemicals most commonly found in fish are mercury and PCBs. However, PFAS, including PFOS, have also been found in fish from certain bodies of water in Michigan.

It is important to note that fish from some areas in Michigan are more contaminated than others. By using the *Eat Safe Fish Guides*, Michigan consumers can be confident that they are making informed choices about eating the fish they catch from their local lake or river.

In addition to the *Eat Safe Fish Guides*, MDHHS also produces the *Buy Safe Fish Guide* to help residents choose seafood that is lower in mercury from local grocery stores, fish markets and restaurants. *The Eat Safe Fish Guides and Buy Safe Fish Guide* are available online [at Michigan.gov/eatsafefish](https://www.michigan.gov/eatsafefish).

For more information on how to buy, eat or prepare safe fish, or to get the 2022 *Eat Safe Fish Guide* for your region, visit [Michigan.gov/EatSafeFish](https://www.michigan.gov/EatSafeFish) and click on **Find Your Area** or call 800-648-6942.

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