

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH...Statement to WaterFront, Feb. 10, 2023

“The Department encourages anyone fishing New York’s vast waterways to visit our dedicated [webpage](#) for information on where to fish and health advisories on eating sportfish (the fish you catch). The health advice is based on fish contamination data collected by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s (DEC) statewide [fish monitoring program](#). **The DEC program actively tests fish for chemicals like per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), PCBs and mercury in New York waters.** Like PCBs and mercury, some PFAS chemicals accumulate in fish, and levels in fish can be many times greater than in the water. Based on DEC data, the Department of Health issues and updates advice on bodies of water, including specific advice for waterbodies and fish species with elevated levels of PFAS. **The [recent study published in the journal \*Environmental Research\* highlights the widespread nature of PFAS occurrence in fish and appropriately underscores the importance of New York’s fish monitoring and fish advisory programs.](#)”**

### Additional Information:

- The Department issues advisories for PFAS based on various considerations, including whether fish tested by the New York State DEC exceed [recommended guidelines](#) (please note, the recommended guidelines for PFOS are presented in parts-per-billion (ppb) in this table). Current PFAS advisories in NYS exist at this time primarily in the [Leatherstocking](#), [Finger Lakes](#), [Hudson Valley](#), and [Long Island Regions](#) of the state.
- The advice on eating fish from New York State can be found [here](#), with an emphasis on women under the age of 50 and children under the age of 15. From this webpage, you can select a region and view the advisory table, which includes the waterbody, fish species, and chemicals of concern, among other information.
- Eating fish provides protein and omega-3 fatty acids, which are important for a healthy diet. The Department’s general advice to eat up to 4 meals per month from the state’s fresh waters – and its more protective advice for specific waterbodies with higher levels of chemicals in fish – allows New Yorkers to make decisions to reduce their exposure to contaminants while continuing to enjoy the health benefits of eating fish and fishing.
- You can read more background information on why the Department issues advisories [here](#), including the basis used to set advisories. Advisories are issued based on a risk management approach and include consideration of contaminant guidelines, quality and quantity of the data, species of fish collected, trends over time, considerations for sensitive populations, and balancing the benefits of eating fish versus the risk of exposure.
- Additional information on chemicals and bacteria in fish can be found [here](#).
- For more information on the DEC’s fish monitoring program, including how it collects data, please reach out to them directly at [PressOffice@dec.ny.gov](mailto:PressOffice@dec.ny.gov).