

August 19, 2009

DSHS Issues Fish Advisory for Lake Isabell

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

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

Adults should limit consumption of largemouth bass from Lake Isabell 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 Isabell.

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.

Elevated levels of mercury in fish do not pose a health risk for people swimming, fishing or participating in other water recreation activities in Lake Isabell.

Lake Isabell is a three-acre lake in Lake Houston Park about 30 miles north of Houston.