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The following fish consumption advisory was issued on 2-11-2009 ***by the Department of Health & Hospitals, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. For more information, please contact:***

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FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORY FOR CROOKED CREEK RESERVOIR

In response to recent sampling and analysis of fish tissue data, the Louisiana Department of Health & Hospitals (DHH), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and Department of Wildlife & Fisheries (DWF) are issuing the following advisory for Crooked Creek Reservoir in Evangeline Parish where unacceptable levels of mercury have been detected in largemouth bass.

DHH, DEQ and DWF advise that the following precautions be taken when eating fish taken from Crooked Creek Reservoir:

- **Women of childbearing age and children less than seven years of age should consume no more than ONE MEAL PER MONTH of largemouth bass from the advisory area. (A meal considered to be half a pound of fish for adults and children.)**

- **Other adults and children seven years of age or older should consume no more than FOUR MEALS PER MONTH of largemouth bass from the advisory area. (A meal is considered to be half a pound for adults and children.)**

Louisiana fish consumption advisories are based on the estimate that the average Louisiana resident eats four fish meals per month (1 meal = ½ pound). Adults that eat more than four meals of fish a month, and women of child-bearing age and children that eat more than one meal of fish a month from local waterbodies, might increase their health risks. You can contact the Office of Public Health toll free at 1-888-293-7020 for more information about eating fish that contain chemicals.

Mercury is an element that occurs naturally in the environment. It is released into the environment through natural processes and human activities. Consequently, there are small amounts of mercury in lakes, rivers, and oceans. Here, the mercury is turned into methylmercury, a form that is particularly harmful to an unborn baby or young child. Fish absorb methylmercury as they feed on aquatic organisms. Nearly all fish contain trace amounts of methylmercury. Larger fish, especially those that feed on other fish, contain more methylmercury than smaller fish. Therefore, in general, it is recommended that smaller fish be consumed instead of larger ones.

People are exposed throughout their lives to low levels of mercury. One way they can be exposed to mercury is from eating contaminated fish. Pregnant women can pass mercury from the fish they eat to their unborn babies, and nursing mothers can pass the mercury to their infants through their breast milk. Health effects from harmful levels of mercury can include nervous system and kidney damage. Developing fetuses are more sensitive to the toxic effects of mercury, especially in the first trimester of pregnancy. In addition to developing fetuses, infants and children are more sensitive to the effects of mercury; therefore, consumption advisories are issued at lower fish tissue concentration levels for these groups.

This advisory is issued as a precaution. Further sampling will be carried out by DEQ to determine the need for modifications to this advisory, including an adjustment of the boundaries if necessary. If you have consumed species under advisory from these waters, it is not likely that there is an immediate need to be concerned about the effects of mercury. However, you should consult your personal doctor if you are concerned.

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