

## Questions about Contaminants

### What contaminants are in fish?

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and mercury are the 2 main contaminants of concern in Wisconsin. PCBs are not of concern in Reservation lakes as they are generally associated with industry, so guidelines presented in this brochure focus on mercury.<sup>†</sup>

### Where does mercury come from?

It is released into the air when rocks erode, volcanoes erupt, and soils decompose. It is also released into the air when power plants burn coal, incinerators burn mercury-containing waste, and during the production of other chemicals.<sup>†</sup>

### How does mercury get in fish?

Airborne mercury attaches itself to water and dust particles and enters lakes and other waters in rain, snow, and runoff. Mercury is found in all waters and accumulates in all parts of fish. Therefore, trimming, skinning, and cooking do not reduce mercury levels in fish.<sup>†</sup>

### What are the health concerns with mercury?

Mercury affects the human nervous system. It can also damage developing brains of children and may affect a child's behavior and ability to learn. In adults, too much mercury may result in loss of coordination and affect vision, hearing, and speech in subtle ways.<sup>†</sup>

### What fish have the most mercury?

All fish contain some mercury. Generally, the larger the fish the more mercury it has. Also, predatory fish (fish that eat other fish) have more mercury. For instance, walleye, northern pike, muskellunge, bass, and catfish tend to have more mercury than bluegill, crappie, perch and trout.

### What groups are most sensitive to mercury?

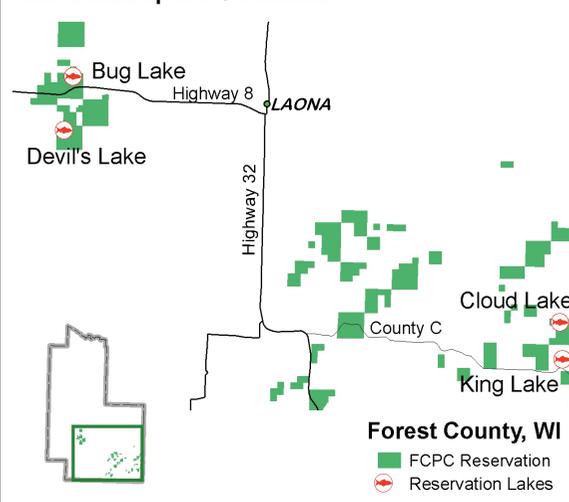
The most sensitive groups are unborn children and children age fifteen and under. This also includes women who plan to become pregnant, women who are pregnant and nursing mothers.

### Should I stop eating fish?

No, fish are a healthy source of protein while being very low in saturated fats. Some doctors even suggest that 1 to 2 meals of fish a week is helpful in preventing heart disease. If you follow this advisory and the Wisconsin DNR publication "Choose Wisely: A health guide for eating fish in Wisconsin" you can still receive the health benefits of fish while reducing the amounts of contaminants you consume.<sup>†</sup>

<sup>†</sup>From "Choose Wisely: A health guide for eating fish in Wisconsin" WDNR-PUB-FH-824 2010

## Forest County Potawatomi Lakes with Fish Consumption Guidelines



If you would like a copy of the advisory for all lakes in the state of Wisconsin published by the Wisconsin DNR, please contact the FCPC Water Resources Program Director at 478-4824 or the FCPC Aquatic Biologist at 478-7361. More information is also available from the FDA at [www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FoodContaminantsAdulteration/Metals/default.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/FoodContaminantsAdulteration/Metals/default.htm) or 1-888-SAFEFOOD and the U.S. EPA at [water.epa.gov/scitech/swguidance/fishshellfish/fishadvisories/advisory.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/scitech/swguidance/fishshellfish/fishadvisories/advisory.cfm).

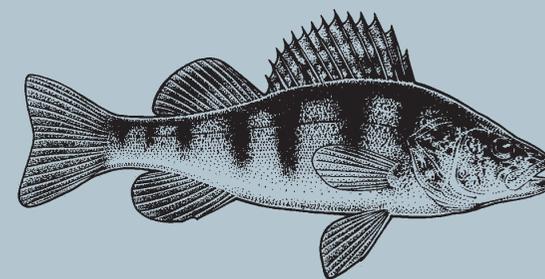


## FOREST COUNTY POTAWATOMI NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

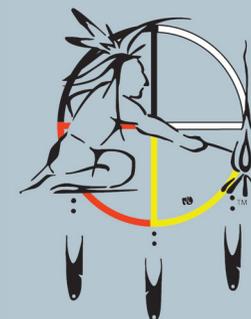
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## FOREST COUNTY POTAWATOMI NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT



## A GUIDE TO SAFELY EATING FISH



FOREST COUNTY POTAWATOMI  
Keeper of the Fire

### Fish Tissue Mercury Testing

In April 2010, the Forest County Potawatomi’s Natural Resources Department collected fish from four lakes on the Reservation for mercury testing. Surveyed lakes included Bug, Devil’s, Cloud and King Lakes where a total of 134 fish were collected from 9 unique species. One fillet from each fish was collected and sent to a certified lab for analysis. The results are summarized in the tables to the right.

Recommendations have changed since the last fish mercury study in 2006, and in some cases have become less or more restrictive. New size recommendations and meal frequencies are among the most common changes. The Water Resources Program will continue to monitor fish mercury levels every 4-5 years and provide new recommendations as needed.

### Recommendations for Eating Fish from Reservation Lakes

The recommendations provided in this guide are based on two categories of people. The categories are:

**A. Sensitive Population** - Women of childbearing years, nursing mothers, and all children under the age of 15;

**B. General Population** - Women beyond their childbearing years and men.

### Directions

Using the tables to the right answer the following questions to determine the recommended amount of fish for safe consumption.

- Are you in the Sensitive Population (women of childbearing years, nursing mothers, and all children under the age of 15) or the General Population (women beyond their child bearing years and men)?
- What lake on the Reservation are the fish from?
- What kind of fish and how long do they measure?
- Which consumption category (unlimited, 1 meal/week, 1 meal/month, do not eat) do the fish fall under?

**Note:** Recommendations are based on a meal portion size that is equal to 6 ounces of cooked fish. This is approximately the size of both your outstretched hands from your wrist to the tip of your fingers.

*\*Guidelines were based on the Wisconsin DNR’s general fish consumption advice.*

SENSITIVE POPULATION Women of Childbearing Age and Children Under the Age of 15				
	Unrestricted	1 Meal/Week	1 Meal/Month	Do Not Eat
Bug Lake Bug Lake Bug Lake Bug Lake Bug Lake Bug Lake	Pumpkinseed less than 6"	Pumpkinseed greater than 6" Yellow perch all sizes Brook trout all sizes* Rainbow trout all sizes*	Largemouth bass all sizes	
Devil's Lake Devil's Lake Devil's Lake	Bluegills less than 6"	Northern pike all sizes*	Bluegills greater than 6" Largemouth bass less than 19" Black crappie greater than 14"	Largemouth bass greater than 19"
Cloud Lake Cloud Lake Cloud Lake	Unrestricted	Bluegill all sizes Largemouth bass less than 13" Yellow perch all size	Largemouth bass greater than 13"	
King Lake King Lake King Lake King Lake King Lake King Lake	Yellow perch less than 7" White sucker less than 21"	Bluegill all sizes* Black crappie all sizes* Largemouth bass less than 12" Rock bass all sizes Yellow perch greater than 7" White sucker greater than 21"	Largemouth bass greater than 12" Walleye all sizes*	

*\*Guidelines were based on the Wisconsin DNR’s general fish consumption advice.*

GENERAL POPULATION Women Beyond Their Childbearing Years and Men			
	Unrestricted	1 Meal/Week	1 Meal/Month
Bug Lake Bug Lake Bug Lake Bug Lake Bug Lake	Pumpkinseed all sizes Yellow perch less than 11" Brook trout all sizes* Rainbow trout all sizes*	Largemouth bass all sizes Yellow perch greater than 11" Northern pike all sizes*	
Devil's Lake Devil's Lake Devil's Lake	Bluegill less than 7"	Bluegills greater than 7" Largemouth bass less than 14" Black crappie all sizes	Largemouth bass greater than 14"
Cloud Lake Cloud Lake Cloud Lake	Bluegill all sizes Yellow perch all sizes	Largemouth bass all sizes	
King Lake King Lake King Lake King Lake King Lake King Lake	Bluegill all sizes* Black crappie all sizes* Rock bass all sizes Yellow perch all sizes White sucker all sizes	Largemouth bass less than 21" Walleye all sizes*	Largemouth bass greater than 21"

