

SC regulators warn against eating bass from two upstate lakes

August 15 2016, by Bruce Smith

People should only eat limited amounts of bass from two upstate lakes because of mercury found in the tissue of those species, state regulators cautioned Monday in their annual fish consumption advisory.

The Department of Health and Environmental Control added spotted [bass](#) from Lake Keowee and Lake Hartwell as well as largemouth bass from Lake Hartwell to its advisory for rivers, lakes and [coastal waters](#).

The advisory suggests eating no more than one meal of spotted bass from Lake Hartwell a month and no more than one meal per week of spotted or largemouth bass caught in Lake Keowee. One meal is considered 8 ounces of uncooked [fish](#), about the size of two decks of playing cards.

Regulators recommend that pregnant women, women who might become pregnant, infants, and children do not eat any fish from areas included in the advisory.

"Fish caught in the state's waters are safe to eat if people follow the fish consumption advisory guidelines," David Baize, chief of DHEC's Bureau of Water, said in a news release.

Fish sometimes accumulate minerals and contaminants in their tissue. DHEC monitors fish populations along with the state Department of Natural Resources.

The advisory indicates that people can eat as much fish as they like from

Charleston Harbor and from Lake Murray, northwest of Columbia. But in the lower Savannah River in Jasper County, anglers are being advised not to eat any mudfish or largemouth bass at all.

Recreational fishing in South Carolina is an almost \$700 million industry, according to a 2011 study by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service .

The study found that almost three-quarters of a million people 16 and older spent a combined 11 million days fishing in the state that year, when about half the freshwater fish caught were black bass.

More information: www.scdhec.gov/fish/

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