



# News Release

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**CONTACT:** Chris Boyle—Director of Communications  
(860) 706-9654 – christopher.boyle@ct.gov

## **Connecticut Department of Public Health issues consumption advisories for certain fish species in 11 waterbodies in Connecticut**

HARTFORD, Conn.—The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) today is issuing new or modified consumption advisories for certain fish species caught in several waterbodies in Connecticut. DPH is taking this action in close coordination with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

Upon evaluating perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) concentrations in fish tissue sampled in 2017-2022 from 14 waterbodies using DPH’s recently derived PFOS health risk values, DPH has updated or issued new consumption advisories in 11 waterbodies as shown in the table below. These updated consumption advisories are for the general population and are also protective of sensitive populations.

New or modified consumption advisories are issued for the following rivers: Connecticut, Lower Farmington, Housatonic (near O’Sullivan’s Island in Derby), Natchaug, Willimantic, Shetucket, Naugatuck, Pequabuck, Still (Winchester), Scantic, and Quinnipiac.

“These consumption advisories are necessary to protect public health while allowing for community members to benefit from the nutritional benefits of eating fish,” said DPH Commissioner Manisha Juthani, MD. “PFOS is one of a group of related chemicals known as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). This group of chemicals is commonly used in a wide range of industrial processes and is found in many consumer products. Long-term exposure to PFAS may be associated with increased levels of cholesterol and liver enzymes, a change in immune response, developmental effects, increased chance of high blood pressure and/or increased chance of pre-eclampsia during pregnancy, and an increased chance of thyroid disease.”

Commissioner Juthani added that it was not necessary to modify the current advisories for the Hockanum, Tankerhoosen, and the Upper Housatonic Rivers. Additionally, there are no new or existing advisories in place for the Quinebaug River other than the statewide freshwater advisory described below. Working closely with DEEP—whose fisheries staff have expertise and knowledge of the rivers and fisheries habitat—both state agencies have determined the locations where the fish advisories will apply.

(more)

“Assessing food-related PFAS exposures, including fish and shellfish consumption, is a key recommendation of the Connecticut Interagency PFAS Action Plan,” DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes said. “Evaluating PFAS levels in fish collected from these 14 waterbodies represents significant progress towards protecting the health of our angling community. Our agencies will continue to work together to identify opportunities to conduct additional monitoring, particularly at popular fishing locations and within our Environmental Justice communities.”

It also is important to note that there is a pre-existing statewide advisory that is in place

**Freshwater fish:** The advice for freshwater fish caught in Connecticut for pregnant women, women who could become pregnant, and children under 6 years old (high risk groups) is to eat no more than one meal per month. For all other groups, the advice is to eat no more than one meal per week of freshwater fish. This statewide advice is due to mercury contamination found in Connecticut freshwater fish. This statewide advisory does not apply to sunfish or trout as there are no consumption limits for these fish species, except otherwise noted.

Additional information on DPH fish consumption advisories can be found at: <https://portal.ct.gov/fish> or by calling a DPH staff person at 1-877-458-FISH (3474). More information on PFAS can be found at <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Environmental-Health/PFAS/PFAS>.

**Consumption Advisory History for Fish Caught in 14 Waterbodies in Connecticut**

<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Updated Consumption Recommendations</b>	<b>Previous Consumption Recommendation</b>
Connecticut River	All except for Shad <sup>b</sup>	<b>1 Meal Per Month due to PFOS levels</b>	1 Meal Per Month (High Risk), 1 Meal Per Week (Low Risk <sup>c</sup> Advisory for Catfish Due to PCB <sup>d</sup> Levels
Lower Farmington River <sup>e</sup>	Yellow Perch and Bass <sup>f</sup>	<b>1 Meal Per Month due to PFOS levels</b>	No Specific Advisory
Hockanum and Tankerhoosen Rivers <sup>g</sup>	All	<b>No Change</b>	Do Not Eat-Everyone, due to PFOS <sup>h</sup> levels
Housatonic River (Near	All	<b>1 Meal Per Month due to PFOS levels</b>	No Specific Advisory

O'Sullivan's Island <sup>i</sup>			
Housatonic River ( <i>Upper, above Lake Lillinonah</i> )	Bass	<b>No Change</b>	Do Not Eat (High Risk), 1 Meal/2 Months (Low Risk) due to PCB Levels
Natchaug, Willimantic and Shetucket Rivers <sup>j</sup> ( <i>Willimantic and Manfield</i> )	Bass	<b>Do Not Eat due to PFOS levels</b>	1 Meal Per Month-Everyone, due to PFOS levels
Natchaug, Willimantic and Shetucket Rivers <sup>j</sup> ( <i>Willimantic and Manfield</i> )	All Species Except for Bass	<b>1 Meal Per Month due to PFOS levels</b>	No Specific Advisory
Naugatuck <sup>k</sup> River	Bass	<b>1 Meal Per Month due to PFOS levels</b>	No Specific Advisory
Pequabuck River	American Eel	<b>1 Meal Per Month due to PFOS levels</b>	No Specific Advisory
Quinnipiac River ( <i>Gorge south of Meriden through Wallingford to Long Island Sound</i> )	All	<b>1 Meal Per Month (Existing advisory extended to Gorge south of Meriden through Wallingford to Long Island Sound) (due to PCB and PFOS levels)</b>	1 Meal Per Month-Everyone due to PCB levels
Quinebaug River	NA	<b>No Change</b>	No Specific Advisory
Scantic River <sup>l</sup>	American Eel	<b>1 Meal Per Month due to PFOS levels</b>	No Specific Advisory
Still River ( <i>Winchester</i> )	Bass	<b>1 Meal Per Month due to PFOS levels</b>	No Specific Advisory

<sup>a</sup>All modified or new consumption advisories are for the general population, however it is important to note that they are also protective of sensitive groups such as children under 6 years old, pregnant and nursing women and women who could become pregnant.

<sup>b</sup>Shad only travel to the Connecticut River to spawn, are only in the river for a short period of time, have low contamination and are not included in the advisory.

<sup>c</sup> High Risk group includes children under 6 years old, pregnant women, nursing women, and women who could become pregnant. Low risk group includes everyone else.

<sup>d</sup>Polychlorinated biphenyls

<sup>e</sup>Downstream from the Rainbow Dam in the town of Windsor to the confluence with the Connecticut River.

<sup>f</sup>Includes both large and smallmouth bass.

<sup>g</sup>Hockanum River from the outlet of Shenipsit Lake (Tolland Ave., Vernon) to the Connecticut River, including several riverine impoundments of Papermill Pond, including Pitney Park (Vernon), Union Pond (Manchester), small impoundments and ponds (East Hartford) and the Tankerhoosen River (upstream to dam at Main Street, Vernon).

<sup>h</sup>Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid.

<sup>i</sup>The Housatonic River upstream to the Derby Dam and downstream to the Rt. 15 Bridge. Upstream on the Naugatuck River to the Kinneytown Dam.

<sup>j</sup>The Natchaug River from the dam at the Willimantic Reservoir (northern boundary) downstream to where it forms the Shetucket River. The advisory extends a ½ mile down the Shetucket River to Plains Road. Willimantic River from where it meets the Shetucket and Natchaug Rivers upstream to the dam at Pine Street.

<sup>k</sup>Includes the entire Naugatuck River as well as the West Branch Naugatuck River downstream of Stillwater Pond, Torrington.

<sup>l</sup>Upstream boundary is the Somersville Pond Dam.

