



STATE OF MICHIGAN

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

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Michigan releases new fish consumption guidelines for rainbow smelt and carp caught in various lakes

LANSING, Mich.- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has released new Eat Safe Fish guidelines for rainbow smelt and carp from seven different lakes across the state.

The updated Eat Safe Fish guidelines recommend limiting the consumption of certain locally caught smelt and carp based on levels of chemicals found in the commonly eaten parts of the fish.

The new rainbow smelt guidelines are based on elevated levels of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) found in the smelt. PFOS is a chemical in the family of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and can build up in fish and in people who eat these fish.

The new Eat Safe Fish consumption guidelines for rainbow smelt are as follows:

- Lake Huron: **6 servings per year.**
- Lake Michigan: **1 serving per month.**
- Portage Lake in Houghton County: **1 serving per month.**
- Gull Lake in Kalamazoo County: **2 servings per month.**
- Higgins Lake in Roscommon County: **4 servings per month.**

MDHHS currently recommends that no one eat more than **1 serving per month** of rainbow smelt from Lake Superior due to elevated levels of PFOS.

MDHHS is also releasing two new guidelines for carp based on elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Like PFOS, PCBs take a very long time to break down in the environment and can build up in fish and in people who eat these fish.

The new Eat Safe Fish consumption guidelines for carp are as follows:

- Thompson Lake in Livingston County: **Do Not Eat** advisory.
 - This means everyone should avoid eating carp from Thompson Lake.
- Earl Lake in Livingston County: **Limited** advisory.
 - This means individuals under age 15, those with health problems such as cancer or diabetes and those who might have children in the next several

years, are pregnant or are breastfeeding should avoid eating carp from Earl Lake. All other individuals should limit their consumption of carp from Earl Lake to one or two servings per year.

These new guidelines and others previously published in the MDHHS *Eat Safe Fish Guides* for lakes and rivers statewide can help Michiganders find safer fish to eat and reduce exposure to chemicals that can cause harmful health effects.

The *Eat Safe Fish Guides* are currently being updated for 2023 and will include these new carp and smelt guidelines along with others pending analysis. To view the regional 2022 *Eat Safe Fish Guides*, visit Michigan.gov/EatSafeFish and click on “Find Your Area.”

It is important to note that fish from some areas in Michigan are more contaminated than others. By using the *Eat Safe Fish Guide*, Michigan fish consumers can be confident they are making informed choices about eating the fish they catch from their local lake or river. Eat Safe Fish guidelines are not laws or regulations, and no one is required to follow them.

For more information on where to find, prepare, eat or buy safe fish, visit Michigan.gov/EatSafeFish or call MDHHS Division of Environmental Health Hotline at 800-648-6942.

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