

News release

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New advisories warn of high mercury levels found in fish at Brownlee and Phillips reservoirs *Warm-water fish and yellow perch listed in advisory*

Health officials recommend all individuals limit their consumption of warm-water fish that are caught from Brownlee and Phillips Reservoirs. A 2011 analysis conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found elevated mercury levels in these fish.

The advisory for Brownlee Reservoir, on the Snake River and its Powder River Arm, includes warm-water fish such as smallmouth bass, white and black crappie and yellow perch.

The advisory for Phillips Reservoir, on the upper Powder River about five miles east of Sumpter, includes yellow perch.

For both reservoirs health officials recommend:

- People who eat warm-water fish from Brownlee Reservoir and its Powder River Arm should limit their consumption to three meals per month.
- People who eat yellow perch from Phillips Reservoir should limit their consumption to two meals per month.

Young children and unborn babies are the most susceptible to mercury contamination and its health effects. Mercury can damage the developing brain and nervous system, which can lead to lifelong behavior and learning problems.

(more)

This new advisory replaces the advice issued in 1997 by the Oregon Public Health Division for consumption of sport-caught fish from Brownlee Reservoir. This is the first advisory ever issued for Phillips Reservoir.

The Oregon Health Authority, Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Fish and Wildlife continue to monitor contaminant levels and will update advisories if significant changes occur. Additional information about fish consumption and other fish advisories can be found on the Oregon Public Health [website](#).

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