



news release

From The Texas Department of Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Officials Modify Hidalgo County Fish Advisory

The Texas Department of Health (TDH) today modified a fish consumption advisory which has affected several popular fishing areas in Hidalgo County since June.

The area's residents were warned June 24 not to eat fish caught in the Donna Reservoir, the North Floodway of the Arroyo Colorado and all of Hidalgo County's irrigation canals, after fish samples from the waters showed the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Now banned in the U.S., PCBs are suspected cancer-causing chemicals once commonly used in electrical transformers and other equipment. TDH's search for a possible source of the contamination is continuing.

However, tests since June on fish samples from the advisory area have found no traces of PCBs in fish outside the Donna Reservoir and its interconnecting canal system. Therefore, TDH has issued a new advisory, effective immediately, reducing the earlier advisory area. Warning signs have been posted at the most popular fishing sites at the Donna Reservoir and canal system.

Another long-standing fish consumption advisory in the Hidalgo County area, issued in September 1980, remains in effect. That advisory warned of pesticide (DDT and DDE) contamination in fish caught in the Arroyo Colorado, north of the port of Harlingen, including the North Floodway.

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(For more information, contact Richard Thompson, Shellfish Sanitation Control Division, at 512/458-7510 or Margaret Wilson, Public Information Office, at 512/458-7405.)