

June 29, 2010

DSHS Issues Fish Advisory for Lower Leon Creek

The Texas Department of State Health Services has issued an advisory warning people not to consume any species of fish from Lower Leon Creek from the Old U.S. Highway 90 bridge downstream to the Loop 410 bridge in San Antonio.

The advisory was issued after laboratory testing showed elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, in fish samples collected from the creek.

DSHS tested tissue samples from nine species of fish as part of a re-evaluation of the creek. A smaller portion of the creek has been under a similar advisory since 2003 because of elevated levels of PCBs.

Long-term consumption of PCBs may cause cancer and reproductive, immune system, developmental and liver problems. According to DSHS standards, PCB levels in fish above 0.047 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) may pose a health risk to humans. PCB levels in the most recent Lower Leon Creek samples averaged 0.126 mg/kg and were as high as 0.961 mg/kg.

PCBs are industrial chemicals once used as coolants and lubricants in electrical transformers and capacitors. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency banned PCBs in 1979, but items containing PCBs did not have to be replaced. PCBs degrade slowly in the environment.

Elevated levels of PCBs in fish do not pose a health risk for people swimming or participating in other water recreation activities in Lower Leon Creek.

-30-

(News Media Contact: Chris Van Deusen, DSHS Assistant Press Officer, 512-458-7753)

DSHS Press Office on [Twitter](#)