



State Water Resources Control Board

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Second “My Water Quality” Internet Portal Evaluates Safety of Fish and Shellfish Consumption in California

Sacramento— The California Water Quality Monitoring Council (Monitoring Council) is unveiling the second My Water Quality internet portal to connect decision makers and the public with water quality information. The theme of this new portal is “*is it Safe to Eat Fish and Shellfish from Our Waters?*”

The portal includes interactive maps and monitoring data that focus on chemical contaminants and biotoxins in fish and shellfish that may affect the health of human consumers. The goal is to make this information as timely and user-friendly, as possible.

Fish and shellfish are nutritious and good for you to eat. But some fish and shellfish may take in toxic chemicals or biotoxins from the water they live in and the food they eat. Some of these contaminants build up in the fish and shellfish—and in the humans that eat them—over time. Although the chemical levels are usually low, it is a good idea to learn what contaminant data are available for the water bodies where you fish and for the fish or shellfish you eat. Fish and shellfish consumption advice from a number of organizations is also available to help you to obtain the benefits of eating fish and shellfish while avoiding potentially harmful contaminants.

The new internet portal brings this information together in a single location and in an easy to understand manner for the public, environmental organizations, and water quality professionals.

In 2006, the California legislature mandated coordination of water quality monitoring and assessment activities among organizations inside and outside California government, and that this information be made available to decision makers and the public via the internet. The Monitoring Council was formed in 2007 by a cooperative agreement between the California Environmental Protection Agency and the Natural Resources Agency for this purpose. In July, the Monitoring Council released its first internet portal, *Is it Safe to Swim in Our Waters?*

The Monitoring Council is bringing together water quality information from a variety of organizations with special expertise in chemical contaminants in fish and shellfish, coordinated through the Bioaccumulation Oversight Group (BOG) of the Water Boards’ Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP). State and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations have pitched in to answer your water quality questions.

View the new portal at <http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/>.

My Water Quality Internet Portal Fact Sheet

Questions addressed at *Is it Safe to Eat Fish and Shellfish from Our Waters?*

- ***Can I eat fish or shellfish caught in my lake, stream, or ocean location?***
View fish safe eating guidelines for the water bodies and sport fish that you and your family and friends catch.
- ***Does my lake, stream, or ocean location have fish with contaminants at levels of potential concern?***
View recent statewide monitoring results in comparison to thresholds for human health risks developed by the California Environmental Protection Agency.
- ***What are the levels and long-term trends in my lake, stream, or ocean location?***
Explore fish contaminant data for your favorite fishing locations. Data from nearby water bodies are also presented so that you can compare.
- ***Which beaches, lakes, and streams are listed by the State as impaired?***
See which California waters are listed as impaired for uses related to fish or shellfish consumption by humans.
- ***What is being done to reduce these problems?***
Impairments are required to be remedied via corrective actions, including the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). View TMDL projects designed to restore the safety of eating fish and shellfish from our waters and information on how you can reduce your exposure to potential fish contaminants.

More My Water Quality Web Portals Are Coming

Within the next few months, additional web portals will be released to address the following water quality questions:

- Are Our Aquatic Ecosystems Healthy?
- Is Our Water Safe to Drink?

These next portal efforts will focus on wetlands and groundwater, respectively.

Help Us Make It Better

We are continually working to improve the quality of the information presented in these web portals and the underlying water quality monitoring and assessment programs. Please help us to make them better

- Contact the SB 1070 Coordinator with your comments and suggestions
- Attend a meeting of the California Water Quality Monitoring Council
- Get involved in one or more of the expert stakeholder work groups

More information about the Senate Bill 1070, the Monitoring Council, and the expert stakeholder work groups is on the web at

http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/.