

2015 Annual Policy Review of Criteria and Levels of Concern for Certain Toxic Substances Used in Determining Whether to Issue a Fish Consumption Advisory

In October 2000, pursuant to § 32.1-248.01 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) published guidelines for issuance of fish consumption advisories due to contamination of fish with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), mercury, dioxin, and Kepone. The initial guidelines established the criteria and contaminant levels of concern that VDH would use for determining whether a fish consumption advisory should be issued for certain fish species in state waters. Yearly, VDH reviews the guidelines' criteria and levels of concern for determining whether these toxic substances in fish warrant a fish consumption advisory.

In July 2015, the VDH State Public Health Toxicologist reviewed the current guidelines and applicable science related to PCBs, PBDEs, mercury, dioxin, and Kepone and determined that changes to the current fish consumption advisory guidelines are not indicated at this time. The most current guidelines are available on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall through the following links: [dioxin](#), [Kepone](#), [mercury](#), [PBDEs](#), and [PCBs](#). Below is the current list of contaminants and associated action levels that prompt a fish consumption advisory in Virginia:

PCBs – When PCBs levels in fish range from 100 to below 500 micrograms per kilogram ($\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}$), VDH recommends limiting consumption of contaminated fish species to two, 8-oz meals per month. When levels equal or exceed 500 $\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}$ in fish, VDH recommends avoiding consumption of contaminated fish species.

PBDEs – When PBDEs levels in fish range from 0.5 to below 1.0 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg), VDH recommends limiting consumption of contaminated fish species to two, 8-oz meals per month. When levels equal or exceed 1.0 mg/kg in fish, VDH recommends avoiding consumption of contaminated fish species.

Mercury – When mercury levels in fish range from 0.5 to below 1.0 mg/kg , VDH recommends limiting consumption of contaminated fish species to two, 8-oz meals per month. When levels range from 1.0 to below 2.0 mg/kg , VDH recommends limiting consumption to one, 8-oz meal per month. When levels equal or exceed 2.0 mg/kg in fish, VDH recommends avoiding consumption of contaminated fish species.

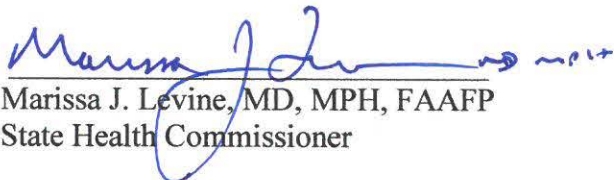
Dioxin – When dioxin levels in fish range from 2.0 to below 5.0 nanograms per kilogram (ng/kg), VDH recommends limiting consumption of contaminated fish species to two, 8-oz meals per month. When levels range from 5.0 to below 10 ng/kg , VDH recommends limiting consumption to one, 8-oz meal per month. When levels equal or exceed 10 ng/kg , VDH recommends avoiding consumption of contaminated fish species.

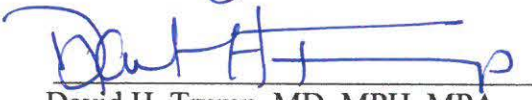
Kepone – VDH is currently using the U.S. Food and Drug Administration action level of 0.3 mg/kg . When Kepone levels in fish are 0.3 mg/kg or higher, VDH recommends avoiding consumption of contaminated fish species.

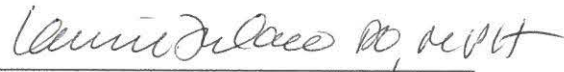
The next annual review of Virginia's guidelines for issuance of fish consumption advisories will be conducted in June to July 2016.

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§ 32.1-248.01. Fish consumption advisories

The Virginia Department of Health shall develop a written policy, which shall be revised annually, that identifies the criteria and levels of concern for certain toxic substances that the Department will use in determining whether to issue a fish consumption advisory. The policy shall initially include the criteria and levels of concern for polychlorinated biphenyl, mercury, dioxin, and kepone. The Department shall issue fish consumption advisories as provided for in the policy and shall do so on a timely basis. A copy of the written policy shall be provided to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions, the House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources, the Senate Committee on Education and Health, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources no later than one month prior to adoption of the policy but no later than December 1, 2000. Any revision of the policy shall be submitted to the chairmen of these committees no later than one month prior to the adoption of the revision by the Department.

2000, cc. 17, 1043.