



# NEWS

GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY  
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## **GBRA Statement regarding DSHS Advisory on Fish Consumption from Canyon Lake**

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SEGUIN- Since 2000, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other federal agencies have been pursuing fish tissue sampling for mercury in lakes throughout the United States.

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) started sampling in 2003. Currently, they have issued fish consumption advisories for 13 water bodies in Texas.

Today, the DSHS issued a Fish and Shellfish Consumption Advisory (ADV-30) for Longnose Gar and Striped Bass from Canyon Lake in Comal County. Tissue samples collected from these two species in November 2005 indicated the presence of mercury at concentrations exceeding health assessment guidelines established by DSHS.

Because most fish do not have mechanisms to remove mercury from their systems, it can accumulate over time in the tissue of larger predatory fish as they consume smaller mercury-contaminated fish. This poses public health issues because of the human consumption of fish.

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) has been advised by DSHS that the advisory only pertains to the consumption of Longnose Gar and Striped Bass. All other activities at Canyon Lake, including fishing, swimming, water skiing, and the water supply are completely safe and not affected.

GBRA is aware that mercury accumulation in fish and other organisms is a national concern. According to the DSHS and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the sources of mercury can be natural (erosion, soils, and volcanoes) and from human activities, including burning fossil fuels, incineration of solid waste, mining, smelting, chlorine-alkali, cement production and wastewater treatment.

For this reason, GBRA has had the discharge effluent and sludge processes from our Canyon Park Estates Wastewater Plant analyzed and found no detectable amounts of mercury. We have also received the state's analysis of our potable water treated at the GBRA Western Canyon Regional Water Plant and, again, no mercury was detected at that facility.

GBRA strongly supports the protection of all natural resources, including water and aquatic life. We applaud ongoing cooperative efforts among the EPA and other federal agencies and organizations to focus on special mercury issues and to develop a National Action Plan for mercury. We will also support regional efforts to determine possible sources within the EPA Region 6 area.

As a convenience to the public, the GBRA website at [www.gbra.org](http://www.gbra.org) is posting the DSHS Canyon Lake Advisory and supporting report, as well as links to the DSHS and Texas Parks and Wildlife websites where additional information about mercury is available.