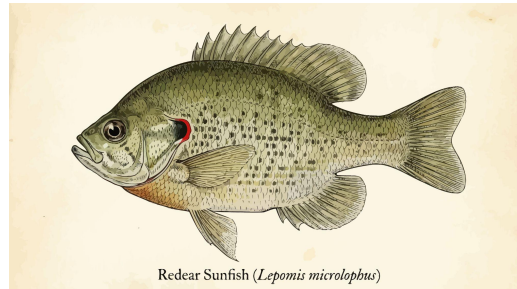


Date: Aug. 20, 2026

Do Not Consume Fish Consumption Advisory for Redear Sunfish, Horsethief Basin

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), in association with the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), has issued a Red Light Fish Consumption Advisory for redear sunfish caught in Horsethief Basin. This advisory is based on recent analysis of fish tissue data that indicate elevated levels of mercury. ADEQ recommends that redear sunfish caught from Horsethief Basin not be consumed.



ADEQ and AGFD use a color-coded system to provide fish consumption guidance for fish caught in Arizona lakes, rivers and streams:

- Green Light: Fish may be consumed per standard dietary guidelines
- Orange Light: Fish may be consumed within recommended limits
- Red Light: Do not consume fish

Interactive eMap | [View Green Light Fisheries and Fish Consumption Advisories in Arizona >](#)

ADEQ and AGFD collect and test fish for contaminants and compare results to recommended health thresholds. Contaminants can accumulate in fish primarily through a process called bioaccumulation, where the chemicals build up in the body faster than they can be excreted. Unless otherwise indicated in the Green Light Fisheries status, other types of fish found in Arizona with lower bioaccumulation factors remain good choices for consumption | [Learn More >](#)

Fish are an excellent source of protein and can be an important part of a healthy, balanced diet as they are low in saturated fat. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issue dietary guidelines for fish consumption that recommend adults consume about two servings (8 ounces total) of seafood per week.¹ For children and pregnant women, these recommendations vary to protect public health.²

Catch and release fishing, bird watching and other recreational activities at the lake are not affected by this advisory and are encouraged for enjoying the great outdoors. Generally, contaminant levels found in water are significantly lower than those found in fish tissue.

ADEQ and AGFD will continue monitoring fish tissue data across Arizona waterbodies to protect public health and provide updated fish consumption guidance as new information becomes available.

¹ <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>

² <https://www.epa.gov/choose-fish-and-shellfish-wisely/epa-fda-advice-about-eating-fish-and-shellfish>

Background & Resources

Fish consumption advisories recommend consumption limits follow federal dietary guidelines when contaminant levels are below health thresholds to limited or no consumption when contaminant levels exceed health thresholds; advisories do not apply to commercial fish sold in markets.

Pollutant of Concern: Mercury in the environment can come from various sources and cause numerous health problems such as damage to the central nervous system, depending on the exposure. Infants and pregnant or nursing mothers are considered most at risk to possible health effects | [More Information >](#)

- ADEQ Webpage | [View >](#)
- ADEQ Fish Consumption Advisories Fact Sheet | [View >](#)
- ADEQ Bioaccumulation Infographic | [View >](#)
- AGFD Fish Consumption Advisories | [View >](#)
- EPA-FDA Advice about Eating Fish and Shellfish | [View >](#)