

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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Bureau of Environmental Health
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June 9, 2021

Susan Hamilton, Director of Park Operations
MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway St, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Ms. Hamilton:

The purpose of this letter is to inform your office of a new fish consumption advisory for Ashmere Lake in Hinsdale and Peru. The Environmental Toxicology Program (ETP) within the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Environmental Health (DPH/BEH), routinely works with municipal health officials to understand the presence and nature of health hazards in the community. Consistent with this role, DPH is issuing a public health fish consumption advisory for Ashmere Lake based on elevated levels of mercury. Enclosed, please find a representative poster of the fish consumption advisory for Ashmere Lake; a brochure on eating fish safely; a list of the public health fish consumption advisories that are being issued in 2021; and a list of all the public health fish consumption advisories that have been issued at freshwater locations in Massachusetts. We recommend the posting of this waterbody upon receipt of this letter.

An interagency committee comprised of DPH, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, works cooperatively to generate fish consumption advisories. These agencies' activities include designing fish surveys and measuring concentrations of contaminants in freshwater fish samples. Data from these activities are evaluated, and if warranted, a DPH public health fish consumption advisory is issued. The advisory may suggest either limiting or refraining from consumption of fish from the water body.

The mercury levels in the fish tested from Ashmere Lake were compared to the DPH guideline level of 0.5 parts per million (ppm). The mercury levels detected in chain pickerel and largemouth bass were above the DPH guideline value and thus the regular consumption of these fish may pose a potential health concern.

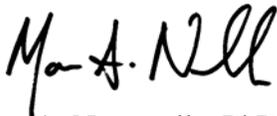
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Based on this, DPH recommends that children under 12, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women that may become pregnant should not eat any chain pickerel and largemouth bass from Ashmere Lake and everyone else should limit consumption of chain pickerel and largemouth bass to two meals per month.

This advisory should be posted at the park administrative office and conspicuously at Ashmere Lake. We have included a representative poster and would be happy to provide you with any assistance you may need in conducting outreach, including translating the advisory into other languages.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at (617) 624-5757.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc A. Nascarella". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and "N".

Marc A. Nascarella, PhD
Director, Environmental Toxicology Program
Bureau of Environmental Health

cc: Jan Sullivan, Acting Director, BEH
Fred Sears, Health Agent, Hinsdale Board of Health
Nanette Mone, Chair, Peru Board of Health

Enclosures: 4