

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
Bureau of Environmental Health  
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July 3, 2019

Susan Hamilton, NE Regional Director  
MA Department of Conservation and Recreation  
251 Causeway St, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Ms. Hamilton:

The purpose of this letter is to inform your office that the Public Health Fish Consumption Advisory for Alewife Brook has been extended to include Little River in Belmont, Cambridge, and Arlington. This broadened advisory is based on new information, provided by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, that indicates likely movement of fish between the two bodies of water.

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 Little River based on elevated levels of PCBs in fish from Alewife Brook. Enclosed, please find a representative poster of the fish consumption advisory for Alewife Brook and Little River; a brochure on eating fish safely; a list of the public health fish consumption advisories that are being issued in 2019; 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.

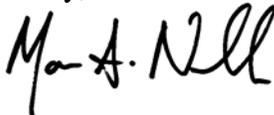
The average PCB concentration in carp sampled from Alewife Brook/Little River was below the Food and Drug Administration Action Level for PCBs of 2.0 mg/kg but within a level that may pose health concerns. PCBs may accumulate in individuals who frequently eat fish contaminated with PCBs thus leading to an increased risk of health effects. Fetuses and nursing infants are particularly sensitive to the developmental and health problems associated with PCB exposure.

Based on this, DPH recommends that children under 12, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women that may become pregnant should not eat any carp from Alewife Brook/Little River and everyone else should limit consumption of carp to two meals per month.

This advisory should be posted at your municipal office and Little River. 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,



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

cc: Jana Ferguson, Director, DPH/BEH  
Jan Sullivan, Deputy Director, DPH/BEH  
Wesley Chin, MPH, Health Director, Town of Belmont  
Claude-Alix Jacob, MPH, Chief PH Officer, Town of Cambridge  
Christine Bongiorno, MPH, Health Director, Town of Arlington  
Doug Kress, Health and Human Services Director, Town of Somerville

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