



State of Utah

Department of Natural Resources

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Duck Advisories Revised

As Utah's duck hunting season approaches, the Division of Wildlife Resources has some good news for hunters—after sampling more ducks over a larger area along the eastern shore of the Great Salt Lake, lower levels of mercury were found in northern shovelers and common goldeneyes and consumption advisories for the two ducks have been revised.

Health professionals have also added a third duck—cinnamon teal—to the list of ducks that have mercury levels that exceed Environmental Protection Agency screening values.

In addition to the three ducks mentioned, seven other duck species were also sampled from October 2005 through mid-February 2006. The mercury levels for all of these species were below EPA screening values, and all of these ducks should be safe to eat. These birds include ducks that are the most popular among Utah's hunters, including mallards, northern pintails and green-winged teal.

Results of the sampling can be viewed at www.health.utah.gov/enviroepi

Utah's upcoming waterfowl season begins Sept. 30 with a special Youth Hunting Day for hunters 15 years of age and younger. The general waterfowl hunt begins Oct. 7.

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Consumption Advisories:

Based on the latest findings, the Utah Department of Health has issued the following consumption advisories:

Northern Shoveler and Cinnamon Teal

Adults should eat no more than two 8-ounce meals per month, and children, pregnant women and women who may become pregnant should eat no more than one 4-ounce meal per month of northern shoveler and cinnamon teal harvested from Great Salt Lake marshes.

Common Goldeneye

Adults should eat no more than one 8-ounce meal per month, and children, pregnant women and women who may become pregnant should not eat common goldeneye harvested from Great Salt Lake marshes.

Cinnamon Teal, Goldeneyes and Shovelers

- Utah hunters do not take many cinnamon teal. Cinnamon teal are the first ducks to migrate out of Utah in the fall, and most have left the state by mid-October. Only five percent of the ducks taken by Utah hunters during the past 10 years were cinnamon teal.

- Utah hunters do not take many common goldeneyes either. Goldeneyes do not start arriving in Utah until mid-November. Only two percent of the ducks taken by Utah hunters during the past 10 years were goldeneyes.

- Utah hunters do take a fair number of northern shovelers. Over the past 10 years, about 10 percent of the ducks taken by Utah hunters were shovelers, but that number has climbed to 26 percent during certain years.

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Duck Sampling Will Continue This Fall

The DWR will continue its sampling efforts during this fall's hunting season, collecting birds taken by hunters in marshes along the eastern shore of the Great Salt Lake. Findings from the sampling effort should be available by summer 2007.

Mercury Work Group

The Department of Environmental Quality, in partnership with the Department of Health and the Division of Wildlife Resources, have established a statewide Mercury Work Group to coordinate and collaborate on mercury studies and investigations that are ongoing in Utah.

John Whitehead, the workgroup's chairman, says the cooperation between state and federal agencies on mercury issues has been instrumental in providing Utahns with the most current mercury information possible. The group includes stakeholders from a broad base of state, federal and nonprofit agencies, industry and the public. Information about the work group is available at www.deq.utah.gov/issues/Mercury/work_group.htm

Information about the waterfowl consumption advisory will also be distributed locally, and will be available at www.health.utah.gov/enviroepi and each of the agencies' Web sites.

More information about the health effects of mercury can be found at www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts46.html

General information about mercury in Utah is available at www.deq.utah.gov/issues/Mercury/index.htm

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