



Lower Mystic River Area



Fact Sheet



Summer 2018

The **Lower Mystic River Area** is a section of the Mystic River and Chelsea Creek (also known as Chelsea River), which runs into the Boston Harbor, and is shown on the map (Figure 1).

The **Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH)** recommends that **no one eat any shellfish and most individuals not eat any fish caught from the Lower Mystic River Area.**

CAN I FISH IN THE LOWER MYSTIC RIVER AREA?

Yes, the Lower Mystic River Area is a great place for fishing. Catch-and-release fishing is allowed in this area, which means that fish are caught for fun and are released back into the water body unharmed.

CAN I EAT FISH CAUGHT IN THE LOWER MYSTIC RIVER AREA?

- MDPH recommends that children under 12, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women that may become pregnant **should not eat any fish caught from the Lower Mystic River Area.**
- Everyone else can eat bluefish and striped bass.
- Nobody should eat any other fish caught in this area.

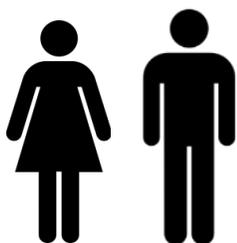
CAN I EAT SHELLFISH CAUGHT IN THE LOWER MYSTIC RIVER AREA?

No, shellfishing is not allowed in this area. No one should catch or eat any kind of shellfish including oysters, clams, mussels, crabs, and lobsters.

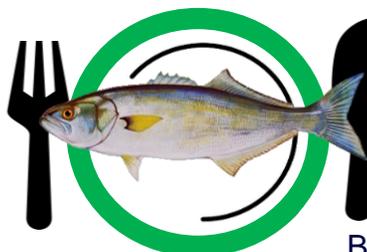
Lower Mystic River Area Advice



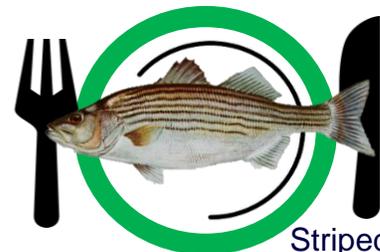
Children under 12, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women that may become pregnant should **not eat any fish or shellfish** caught from this area.



Everyone else should **ONLY eat bluefish and striped bass** from this waterbody.



Bluefish



Striped Bass

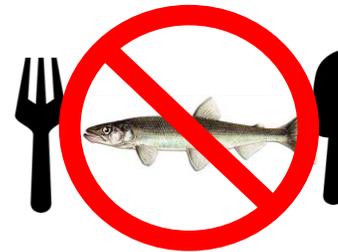
Examples of Polluted Fish in the Lower Mystic River Area



American Eel



Flounder



Rainbow Smelt



Striped Sea Robin



White Perch



Skate

WHAT CHEMICALS CAN BE FOUND IN THE FISH?

Chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), mercury, arsenic, and lead were among those measured in fish caught from the Lower Mystic River Area. These chemicals settle into waterbodies from natural and industrial sources. Fish then swallow the chemicals that are in the water and sediment. These chemicals can stay inside the fish and build up inside their muscle or fat over time.

WHO IS MOST SENSITIVE TO THESE CHEMICALS?

Children under 12, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women that may become pregnant may be at a higher risk of getting sick from these chemicals than other people. There is different advice for these people because it is important that they do not eat too much of a chemical.

WHAT IF I ATE FISH OR SHELLFISH FROM THIS AREA BEFORE?

MDPH's advice is based the amount of chemical in fish that is safe for everyone to eat over many years. We would not expect you to get sick if you previously ate some fish or shellfish from this area.

Oysters and green crab from this area have high levels of lead in addition to other contaminants. Babies and young children are at a higher risk of getting sick from lead. In Massachusetts, children must be tested for lead multiple times before the age of 4. Talk to your doctor if your child is not up to date on their blood lead testing or you have questions about the chemicals found in these fish and your child's health. Lead tests can also be taken at local health clinics.

You should continue to eat other fish from other locations. Fish is a great source of nutrients and is good for your health. Choose to eat several different kinds of fish and seafood.

Serving Size



An adult's uncooked serving size is about 8 ounces (the size of an adult's hand)

A child's uncooked serving size is about 4 ounces (the size of an adult's palm)

Additional places to fish near the Lower Mystic Area

Waterbody	Catch & release fish?	Catch & eat shellfish?	<p>Children under 12, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women that may become pregnant</p> 	<p>Everyone Else</p> 
<p>Charles River (South Natick Dam to Museum of Science Dam)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No*</p>	<p>Do not eat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carp • Largemouth Bass  <p>Carp Largemouth Bass</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not eat carp • Do not eat more than two 8 ounce servings of Largemouth Bass a month  <p>Carp</p>
<p>Broad Sound</p> <p>including: Rumney Marsh Reservation Revere Beach Short Beach Winthrop Beach</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No*</p>	<p>Do not eat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bigeye Tuna, Bluefish, King Mackerel, Marlin, Shark, Swordfish  <p>Bigeye Tuna Bluefish</p> <p>King Mackerel Marlin</p> <p>Shark Swordfish</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not eat lobster tomalley • Eat a variety of fish
<p>Boston Harbor</p> <p>including: Winthrop Fishing Pier Constitution Beach Castle Island</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No*</p>	<p>Do not eat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All restricted fish in Broad Sound • Flounder, Lobster  <p>Flounder Lobster</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not eat lobster tomalley • Eat a variety of fish

*This includes oysters, clams, and mussels.

There are many additional good places to catch and eat fish throughout Massachusetts. Listed above are places to fish in and near the Lower Mystic River Area and advice about what fish to eat, along with a map (Figure 1).

Figure 1. The Lower Mystic River Area and Nearby Additional Areas to Catch Fish



Where can I get more information?

**ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY PROGRAM
BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, MDPH**
250 Washington Street, 7th Floor, Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-624-5757 | TTY: 617-624-5286 | www.mass.gov/lower-mystic

For information about fishing locations, contact the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game Division Fisheries and Wildlife at 508-389-6300 or visit www.mass.gov/masswildlife

For a complete list of statewide and waterbody specific fish advisories call the MDPH Environmental Toxicology Program at 617-624-5757 or visit www.mass.gov/dph/fishadvisories

For additional information about federal guidance for eating fish visit www.epa.gov/fishadvice



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