



Program Manager, Jim Powell
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FACT SHEET

Proposed Revisions to Alaska's Water Quality Criteria Manual for Toxic and Other Deleterious Organic and Inorganic Substances: Human Health Criteria

What are the human health criteria? Alaska's human health criteria are intended to protect Alaskans who consume water, fish and other aquatic organisms. These criteria are based on EPA's recommended human health criteria, and are calculated using EPA's Reference Dose (RfD) guidelines and acceptable risk level.

Why are the human health criteria NOT being updated as part of the Toxics Manual Revisions? Alaska has chosen not to update the human health criteria at this time. Oregon adopted the revised human health criteria published by EPA in the 2003 *National Recommended Water Quality Criteria*. These criteria were based on a national fish consumption rate of 17.5 grams/day (equivalent to about three 6 oz portions per month). However, tribes in Oregon protested, asserting that the criteria were not protective for tribal communities with higher fish consumption rates than assumed in the national criteria. In October 2008, Oregon proposed a new fish consumption rate of 175 g/day based on the 95th percentile of the population in a survey of fish consumption. DEC is considering whether a similar study to determine Alaska fish consumption rates in Alaska is appropriate. The Alaska fish consumption rate would then be used to calculate Alaska-specific human health criteria using EPA's criteria development methodology.

What's next? The proposed regulations and factsheets can be found at <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/water/wqsar/wqs/index.htm>

DEC will be scheduling workshops to answer questions that the public may have about this proposal. No public testimony will be taken at these workshops. Attend a workshop to learn more about this proposal:

Juneau: 4 pm to 6 pm on Tuesday, January 20, 2009, Main Conference Room, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, 410 Willoughby Avenue, Juneau, AK 99811

Fairbanks: 4 pm to 6 pm on Wednesday, January 21, 2009, Conference Room B/C, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, 610 University Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99709

Oral or written testimony may be given at a public hearing from 4 pm to 6 pm on Thursday, January 22, 2009, 1st Floor Main Conference Room, Alaska

2008 Fact Sheet: Human Health Criteria
Department of Environmental Conservation

Department of Environmental Conservation, 555 Cordova Street, Anchorage, AK 99501. Statewide call-in available by dialing 1-800-315-6338, Conference Code 2881 followed by the pound (#) sign.

All written comments must be received by 5 PM on February 6, 2009.

Comments should be mailed or emailed to:

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Division of Water
Water Quality Standards
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