Ecology Releases Draft Fish-Consumption Report

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

Posted on : August 31, 2012 at 6:10 am

Olympia, WA - The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) has released an update to a technical document that evaluates available data on fish consumption by Washington residents.The public is invited to review and comment on the Fish Consumption Rates Technical Support Document through Oct. 26, 2012. The agency will consider any comments it receives before finalizing the document in late fall.Ecology is working to accurately identify how much fish residents eat so that protective standards may be set for water quality and in-water sediments. Accurate fish and shellfish consumption rates help to maintain the quality of Washington’s aquatic environment. In turn, that protects people’s health and Washington’s healthy, rich fish and shellfish resources.Ecology distributed the first draft of the technical support document for public review in October 2011. The agency asked all interested parties – including tribes, industries, municipalities, and citizens of Washington – to engage in a meaningful dialogue on fish consumption rates.

After receiving several hundred comments on the first draft, Ecology revised the technical support document. The update:· Focuses on scientific and technical issues, and removes perceived regulatory decisions, including a recommended range for fish consumption rates. Decisions on how to use the data will be part of the formal public regulatory process of revising the state’s surface water quality standards with human health criteria, which will include a fish consumption rate. · Adds more information about fish consumption and exposure to contamination faced by both the general and recreational fishing population.You can find the second draft of the Fish Consumption Rates Technical Support Document on Ecology’s website. Comments will be accepted through Oct. 26.Here’s how you can submit comments:· Mail them to Adrienne Dorrah, Washington Department of Ecology, Toxics Cleanup Program, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600.· Email them to fishconsumption@ecy.wa.gov.Ecology will review, consider and respond to all comments. The second draft document may be modified based on public comments.Ecology expects to finalize the technical support document in late fall. Staff will hold technical meetings to discuss the draft document in the next few months. Meetings will be announced at a later date.