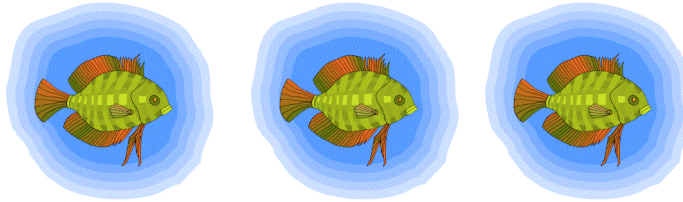


## Mercury - Fish Consumption Advisory Project



<b>Intern Position:</b>	Project development
<b>Start date:</b>	Fall 2009 to Spring, Summer and Fall 2010
<b>Time Commitment:</b>	Flexible - minimum 4 hours per week
<b>Schedule:</b>	Flexible
<b>Pay Rate:</b>	No stipend/Volunteer

### Skills Needed:

- Enthusiastic & energetic
- Good writing/research skills
- Macintosh literate/able to learn
- Self-motivated & creative
- General office skills
- Planning/organizing skills
- Responsible & flexible
- General environmental knowledge

### Project Development:

- Develop and coordinate community outreach efforts
- Help develop outreach Fish Consumption Advisory materials for our region/city of Cleveland
- Coordinate web outreach and other outreach media

### Background:

Health care professionals and agencies encourage people to eat fish for health benefits. However, nearly all fish and shellfish contain levels of toxic contaminants such as traces of mercury, PCBs and other contaminants. Mercury occurs naturally in the environment and can also be released into the air from human activities like industrial pollution. Mercury falls from the air, washes into waterbodies and is turned into methylmercury in the water that is then built up in fish, shellfish and animals that eat fish (including humans).. Most people have blood mercury levels below a level associated with possible health effects. However, 10% of American women of childbearing age (about 7 million women) have methylmercury blood levels above the dose that may put a fetus at risk for adverse neurological impacts. Exposure to mercury and PCB's in the womb can cause learning deficits, delay mental development and language acquisition, put children at risk for later behavioral problems, and affect muscular coordination. The National Academy of Sciences warns that children exposed to unsafe levels of mercury and PCBs in utero by their mothers fish consumption are at greater risk of falling into the group of children "who have to struggle to keep up in school and who might require remedial classes or special education." (NAS 2001) Current research estimates that thousands of unborn children are at-risk of incurring the negative effects of mercury and PCB contamination annually within the U.S. The Ohio Department of Health advises that all persons limit consumption of sport fish caught from all waterbodies in Ohio due to mercury deposition in waterways. The Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for regulation and advisories of commercial fish (fish purchased in a grocery store or consumed in a restaurant). This project will provide vital health care and pollution prevention information to women who might become pregnant, women who are pregnant, nursing mothers, young children, anglers and the general public.



For more information contact:

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