

# MDEQ ISSUES PRECAUTIONARY WATER CONTACT CLOSURE FOR THE PEARL RIVER IN PEARL RIVER COUNTY

(JACKSON, Miss.) -- The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), is working with Pearl River County to advise residents that a precautionary water contact closure has been issued for a section of the Pearl River in Pearl River County. The section extends from Highway 26 near Poplarville south to I-59 near Nicholson. MDEQ, along with other state and federal agencies, are investigating an extensive fish kill on the river. MDEQ recommends that people avoid water contact recreation such as swimming or wading in these waters. In addition, people should avoid eating fish and shellfish from waters in the immediate vicinity of the closure. MDEQ will update or lift this advisory pending the outcome of the investigation.

In general, MDEQ advises people to use common sense and observe the following precautions when catching and consuming fish and seafood:

- Don't eat fish or crawfish that don't look normal. For example, fish with sores, tumors, or discoloration.
- Don't eat fish or crawfish that don't act normal. For example, fish that are gasping for breath at the surface, swimming erratically, or that are dead or dying.
- Don't eat fish or crawfish that smell unusual--such as a sewage, a diesel or a chemical odor.
- If they taste funny, throw them out.
- Cook fish and crawfish thoroughly to kill any bacteria that may be present.

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