

Fact sheet:

Consumption advice for recreationally harvested waterfowl



Environment
Protection
Authority Victoria



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Fact sheet

** This fact sheet provides updated advice for consumption of waterfowl following EPA publication 1672.2 (issued July 2018)*

Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) provides the following recommendations for recreational duck hunters in the East Gippsland area:

Heart Morass

- Do not consume ducks harvested from the Heart Morass Wetlands. This includes both the State Game Reserve and private land.

Dowd Morass

- Do not consume ducks harvested from Dowd Morass Wetland.

Macleod Morass

- Children and adults should not consume duck liver. Children should limit their consumption of duck breast meat to one serve (75g) per month from Macleod Morass Wetland.

EPA provides the following recommendations for recreational duck hunters in the Geelong area:

Hospital Swamp

- Children and adults should not consume duck liver. Children should limit their consumption of duck breast meat to one serve (75g) per month from Hospital Swamp (part of Lake Connemara State Game Reserve).

It was only possible to collect waterfowl for testing from a limited number of wetlands. It is therefore recommended that hunters should exercise caution when consuming waterfowl from sites nearby wetlands with current health advisories. For example, Reedy Lake (part of Lake Connemara State Game Reserve) is within 2 km of Hospital Swamp and waterfowl can freely move between these wetlands. As such, waterfowl collected from Reedy Lake should be treated the same as those

Further information

Contact EPA on
1300 372 842
(1300 EPA VIC)
or epa.vic.gov.au

EPA's consumption advice on fish:
epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/publications/publication/2019/march/1735

Information about the health effects of PFAS and health-based guideline values for PFAS:
<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-pfas.htm>

For information about the PFAS investigation at RAAF Base East Sale, Defence's project team contact 1800 793 201 or eastsale.defence@senserva.com.au

Information about the Department of Defence's national program to manage the impacts of PFAS:
<http://www.defence.gov.au/Environment/PFAS/>

Information about EPA's Interagency Work can be found in EPA's *Interim position statement on PFAS*: epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/publications/publication/2018/august/1669-2

collected from Hospital Swamp until more evidence is provided. EPA will be investigating PFAS concentrations further in these areas.

EPA have issued this precautionary advice following further testing of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) concentrations across Victorian wetlands, including adjacent to Heart Morass.



Consumption advice for recreationally harvested waterfowl

What is the reason for this advice?

EPA has tested waterfowl for PFAS across the state (see publication 1734). Wetlands tested include those with highest waterfowl hunting participation and those areas with known PFAS concentrations. Waterfowl in Victoria were found to contain varying PFAS concentrations, with some exceeding Food Standards Australia and New Zealand trigger points for investigation. PFAS can remain in the body for many years and there is a lack of certainty in its potential health effects. EPA advises restricted consumption of wild waterfowl where PFAS concentrations exceed tolerable daily intakes.

EPA testing demonstrated a slightly elevated exposure risk for children consuming more than one serve of duck breast per month. For the protection of child consumers, EPA has adopted the recommendation of Food Standards Australia and New Zealand to avoid duck liver and limit consumption of duck breast to 1 serve per month.

EPA continues to actively work with key government departments on researching and managing impacts related to PFAS contamination.

What is PFAS?

PFAS are a group of chemicals that include perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorohexane sulfonate (PFHxS).

PFAS have heat, water and stain repelling properties. Because of this, they are used in a range of industrial and consumer products including fire retardants, water proofing, non-stick cookware, food preparation, food packaging, furnishings, clothing and recreational equipment.

PFAS are a concern because they can persist for a long time, both in the environment and in humans.

What are the health effects of PFAS?

Food Standards Australia New Zealand and the Environmental Health Standing Committee (enHealth) report there is no consistent evidence that PFAS are harmful to human health. However, since these chemicals accumulate and remain in humans and the environment for many years, it is recommended that as a precaution, human exposure to PFAS be minimised wherever possible.

I have been catching and eating waterfowl from affected areas. Should I be concerned?

People who have eaten waterfowl are not considered to be at risk of any adverse health effects.

Until more is known about PFAS, however, EPA recommends that to minimise future exposure to PFAS, do not consume (or limit consumption of) any waterfowl caught from the affected wetlands according to the recommendations above.

Background on Department of Defence testing for PFAS

Department of Defence has commenced a national program to investigate and manage the impacts of PFAS on, and near, some of its bases around Australia. Further information regarding Victorian sites currently under investigation can be found on EPA's website - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/current-issues/water-quality/cfa-regional-training-centres>.

