



## **Fish Contamination Education Collaborative (FCEC) General Fact Sheet**

### *Facts for Consumers About Fish Contamination*

- Harmful chemicals have been found in some fish caught off the local coast of Los Angeles and Orange counties. These chemicals—called DDTs and PCBs—pose a health risk for people who regularly eat contaminated fish.
- Anyone who eats these fish regularly risks health problems, including cancer, liver disease and other problems with the immune and endocrine system. Women of child-bearing age and children are more sensitive to the harmful chemicals and should be especially careful to avoid contaminated fish.
- Eating these fish once in a while probably will not make you sick.
- In particular, high levels of DDTs and PCBs have been found in white croaker (also called kingfish or tomcod).
- Consumers should not buy fish directly from anglers on piers.
- Consumers should do the following to be aware of fish contamination at local markets:
  - Ask where the fish at your market comes from.
  - Buy fish from market owners who get fish from licensed wholesalers, distributors or commercial fishermen.
  - Be sure that your market owner is aware of local fish contamination issues.
- To reduce exposure to DDTs and PCBs when eating fish caught locally, consumers must take the following precautions:
  - Eat only the fillet. Use only the fillet when making soup.
  - Before cooking, remove and throw away the head, guts, kidneys, liver and fatty parts such as the skin and belly flap.
  - Bake, broil, steam or grill fish, letting fatty juices drip away.

*These tips are provided by the Fish Contamination Education Collaborative (FCEC), an outreach and education project under the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US-EPA). For more information about the dangers of fish contamination and ways you can ensure your safety, visit [www.pvsfish.org](http://www.pvsfish.org).*