

SB45 INTRODUCED



1 SB45
2 EILS2C9-1
3 By Senators Sessions, Williams, Jones, Price, Weaver
4 RFD: Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
5 First Read: 06-Feb-24



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SYNOPSIS:

This bill would require the State Health Officer to issue an advisory regarding the consumption of fish from waters of this state when deemed appropriate.

This bill would require the State Health Officer to establish a panel to review and approve procedures to administer these advisories.

This bill would require the Alabama Department of Environmental Management to post signage at access areas adjacent to waters of this state with an active fish consumption advisory.

This bill would also require the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to notify fishing license purchasers of active fish consumption advisories.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to consumption of fishes; to require the State Health Officer to issue advisories concerning the consumption of fishes; to establish a panel to review and approve methods to administer these advisories; to require the Alabama Department of Environmental Management to test fishes for



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29 pollutants and to post signage at certain water bodies
30 notifying of active advisories; and to require the Department
31 of Conservation and Natural Resources to notify fishing
32 license purchasers of all active advisories.

33 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

34 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as
35 the Safe and Healthy Outdoor Recreation Act of 2024.

36 Section 2. The Legislature finds and declares all the
37 following:

38 (1) That outdoor recreation, including catching,
39 cooking, and eating fish, is a fundamental way of life for
40 countless residents of this state.

41 (2) That all Alabamians should have the right to know
42 whether it is safe to consume the fish they catch.

43 (3) That illnesses stemming from contact with
44 contaminated fish pose a public health risk to the people of
45 this state.

46 Section 3. (a) The State Health Officer, in
47 consultation with the Director of the Alabama Department of
48 Environmental Management, shall issue a fish consumption
49 advisory when it is reasonable and necessary to protect public
50 health and well-being. The Alabama Department of Public Health
51 shall publish the advisory on its website in a clear and
52 concise manner and maintain a dedicated telephone number to
53 provide information related to the advisory.

54 (b) (1) The State Health Officer shall establish an
55 advisory panel to analyze, develop, and implement the issuance
56 of fish consumption advisories. The panel shall consist of



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57 representatives from all of the following:

58 a. The Alabama Department of Public Health.

59 b. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

60 c. The Department of Conservation and Natural
61 Resources.

62 d. Any business, conservation and environmental
63 nongovernmental organization, or other stakeholder who desires
64 to improve the program.

65 (2) The panel shall meet no less than twice each year
66 and review and approve all of the following:

67 a. Tissue sampling methodologies.

68 b. Specific water bodies and fish species to be
69 sampled.

70 c. Pollutant toxicity limits, as proposed by the
71 Alabama Department of Public Health, the Alabama Department of
72 Environmental Management, and the Department of Conservation
73 and Natural Resources.

74 d. Strategies for communicating fish consumption
75 advisories to the public.

76 e. Any other subject relevant to the program.

77 Section 4. (a) The Alabama Department of Environmental
78 Management, in consultation with the Alabama Department of
79 Public Health, shall conduct regular fish tissue monitoring to
80 evaluate safe consumption levels of fish species. The Alabama
81 Department of Environmental Management shall annually publish
82 a report on its website, which shall be made available for
83 public comment, detailing and identifying the methodology and
84 reasoning for evaluating the species and pollutants chosen.



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85 (b) The Alabama Department of Environmental Management
86 shall post signage at any public boat ramp adjacent to state
87 waters with an active fish consumption advisory notifying the
88 public of this fact. The signage shall include a telephone
89 number for the department, an Internet address, and a quick
90 response code for a website from which to obtain information
91 about fish consumption advisories, water quality, and water
92 discharge permits. The Alabama Department of Environmental
93 Management may consult with other state agencies, political
94 subdivisions of this state, nongovernmental organizations,
95 private corporations, or any other organization to implement
96 this subsection.

97 Section 5. The Department of Conservation and Natural
98 Resources, with each issuance of an electronic fishing
99 license, shall notify the licensee of current fish consumption
100 advisories by providing an Internet address to access all
101 active advisories online.

102 Section 6. This act shall become effective October 1,
103 2024.