

**From:** [PWending@cob.org](mailto:PWending@cob.org)  
**To:** [ECY RE Fish Consumption](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on fish consumption by Washington residents  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 11, 2011 3:33:28 PM

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To Department of Ecology:

I applaud your work to keep Washington a healthy place to live. I wanted to submit a comment on the process the Department of Ecology (Agency) is undertaking to assess fish consumption risks to human health in the state of Washington. My comment is directed at the observation made on the Agency's website at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/toxics/fish.html>. The statement is made on this site that "[i]n fact, we consume fish and shellfish in amounts that are much larger than the state's current rates reflect".

While this statement is likely be true, it is our hope that the Agency collects data to sufficiently determine the amount of fish and shellfish consumed in Washington that originate from Washington waters. The City of Bellingham once had a thriving commercial fishing community. At that time it may have been a safe assumption that Washington residents ate fish that originated in our state's waterways. The commercial fishery in Bellingham Bay and surrounding areas has been significantly reduced

over the course of the past two decades. In fact, the arrival of Alaska salmon to our grocery stores is heralded in local marketing campaigns.

It is our hope that the Agency will conduct a comprehensive survey of the citizenry of our state to accurately assess not only fish consumption levels but also to assess the amount of seafood available and consumed in Washington that originate in Washington. Washington's recreational fishers should also be surveyed to assess the amount of fish and shellfish that are consumed by these individuals and their families . Assumptions of 100% consumption of recreational catch by these fishers should not be made unless it is substantiated by good survey data.

It is likely that the Agency already has plans in place to ensure that its health risk assessment data is derived utilizing accurate consumption information on state residents. If so, I appreciate your efforts to do this. If not, toxicologic data derived from assumptions that are not accurate would likely result in higher costs to Washington residents to obtain a regulatory end-point that is not likely to improve health outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Peg Wendling  
City of Bellingham  
Department of Public Works