

## Safe To Eat? State Environmental Officials Sample Fish Near Dan River Coal Ash Spill Site

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - Scientists with the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) started Monday collecting fish in the Dan River in Eden near the site of the coal ash spill to begin fish tissue testing, which will help determine if fish are safe to eat.

According to a news release, DENR staff members hope to compare the fish tissue samples collected throughout the week with samples the state agency will collect periodically during the next year to help scientists determine any impacts coal ash metals and other residuals could be having on fish in the river. Fish tissues collected this week will serve as baseline data to compare against fish tissue samples collected later in the year. Scientific research shows that it typically takes more than a few weeks for pollutants to accumulate in fish tissue. After these initial samples are taken, staff members plan to return in about one month, then six months and then a year from now to take additional fish tissue samples for comparison.

“Sampling fish tissues is part of our ongoing effort to better understand the impacts of the coal ash spill on the health of the Dan River and all the organisms dependent on it,” said Tom Reeder, director of the N.C. Division of Water Resources in the news release. “The information will help us determine the extent of damage the spill has had on aquatic life and the river, and better inform cleanup efforts.”