

NEWS | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | July 1, 2021

Blue-green algae: Know it. Avoid it. Report it.

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) has confirmed harmful algal blooms in twelve North Dakota lakes. Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) can produce toxins in the water called cyanotoxins.

People that swallow or come into contact with water containing cyanotoxins can become sick with diarrhea and vomiting; experience numb lips, tingling fingers and toes, dizziness, rashes, hives, or skin blisters. Pets and livestock may also suffer adverse health effects. There are no known antidotes for the cyanotoxins produced by blue-green algae. Children and pets are at a higher risk than adults for illness because of their smaller size.

Know it. Blue-green algae can look like grass clippings floating in the water, clumps/puffballs, or green cottage cheese. It can also make the water appear like spilled green paint or green pea soup.

Avoid it.

- Respect advisories and warnings announced by the NDDEQ and government organizations such as public health units and local lake associations. All water advisories and warnings are posted at www.tinyurl.com/WMP-HABS.
- Do not swim, water ski, or boat in areas where the water is discolored or where you see foam, scum, or mats of green or blue-green algae on the water; or let pets swim in or drink from affected waters.
- If you or your pet accidentally swims in water that might have a cyanobacteria bloom, rinse off with fresh water as soon as possible.
- Do not irrigate lawns with pond or lake water that looks scummy or has an awful odor.

Report it. Report suspected blue-green algae blooms to the NDDEQ at 701-328-5210 or on the NDDEQ's Harmful Algal Bloom webpage at www.tinyurl.com/WMP-HABS. Because it can take time to receive laboratory test results, we urge people to be cautious and avoid waters that look discolored, scummy, or have a foul odor.

Enjoy a safe day Fourth of July, and *when in doubt, stay out.*

For more information contact:

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