

NEWS | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | October 11, 2024

Hunters should take caution near waterbodies with blue-green algae

BISMARCK, N.D. – Waterfowl and upland bird hunting seasons are underway. The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality cautions hunters to watch for potentially toxic blue-green algae in wetlands and lakes while in the field this fall. Ingested blue-green algae can produce cyanotoxins, causing severe health effects in dogs and humans.

Common side effects for humans exposed to water containing cyanotoxins include diarrhea, vomiting, numb lips, tingling fingers and toes, dizziness, rashes, hives, and skin blisters. Canine deaths, seizures, vomiting, and skin irritation have all been linked to these blooms. There are no known antidotes for cyanotoxins.

Know it. Blue-green algae can take many different forms. Beware of algae that looks like grass clippings floating in the water, clumps/puffballs, or green cottage cheese. Affected water may also appear like spilled green paint or green pea soup and is commonly bright green or turquoise in color.

Avoid it. View waterbody statuses on the Environmental Quality Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Story Map from May 1 to Dec. 31 at www.tinyurl.com/WMP-HABS.

Do not let pets swim in or drink from waters suspected of containing blue-green algae. Carry plenty of fresh water for you and your hunting dog. If you or your hunting dog accidentally swims in water that might have an algal bloom, rinse off with fresh water as soon as possible.

Environmental Quality has concluded the HABs monitoring program for the recreational season (May 1 –to Sept. 30). We urge the public to be cautious and avoid waters that look discolored, scummy, or have a foul odor.

Enjoy a safe and successful hunt, and *when in doubt, stay out.*

For more information contact:

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