

August 13, 2009

Blue-Green Algae Advisory

Alberta Health Services is advising residents that blue-green algae is currently present in the waters of Lake Isle in the counties of Parkland and Lac St. Anne. Residents living near the shores of this lake and recreational users are advised to avoid contact with the water in Lake Isle at this time.

Blue-green algae produces a toxin (poison) that can cause serious illness to animals or humans who drink or have skin contact with water containing this toxin. In some instances, domestic animals such as dogs and cattle have died as a result of ingesting toxin produced by the blue-green algae. There are, however, no records of human deaths resulting from blue-green algae poisoning.

Symptoms of blue-green algae poisoning in humans may include fever, headache, dizziness, stomach cramps, vomiting, diarrhea, skin and eye irritation, sore throat and swollen lips. Symptoms seldom persist for more than two or three days.

Alberta Health Services advises individuals to take the following precautions in lakes where blue-green algae is present:

1. **DO NOT DRINK WATER** from or allow your pets to drink water from these lakes.
2. **DO NOT CONSUME** any fish from the lake when a blue-green bloom is present.
3. **DO NOT SWIM OR WADE** or allow your pets to swim or wade in water containing visible blooms.
4. **AVOID CONTACT** with blue-green algae dried on the shorelines.

Most blue-green algae blooms are short-lived. Lakes and other water bodies affected by blue-green algae blooms usually return to a safe state within several days of the bloom.

If you suspect a problem related to the algae bloom or if you require further information on blue-green algae, please contact Health Link Alberta at 1-866-408-5465.

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For media inquiries, please contact:

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