



Blue Green Algae

Noted on
Pelican
Lake



Today, August 19, 2021

Toxic Blue Green Algae Blooms were spotted on the Northeast Shore and in Treacherous Bay.

BEWARE OF BLUE-GREEN ALGAE

In Wisconsin, blue-green algae blooms generally occur between mid-June and late September. The recent warm-sunny weather in much of Wisconsin is fueling blue-green algae blooms on some popular Wisconsin lakes. These blooms can produce harmful toxins known as cyanotoxins, which can cause illness in people and their pets.

There have been reports of algae-related health concerns. State and local public-health and water-quality officials are warning the public to avoid swimming, wading, skiing or coming into contact with lake and pond water where a green to bluish-green scum or mat of algae is present. If a person's feet aren't visible when wading into water up to the knees, this may indicate impaired water quality.

Blue-green algae blooms can move throughout a lake, depending upon wind and wave action, or may dissipate completely. If bluish-green scum isn't

visible, it may indicate the water has improved; however, it is always important not to ingest lake water.

Blue-green algae are always present in Wisconsin water bodies at low levels. When conditions are favorable, usually in summer, the number of algae can increase dramatically. Algae blooms appear as bright green in the water. They may have blue-green, white, or brown foam, scum, or mats that float on the water and accumulate along the shore. Some algal species produce toxins that, when ingested, can harm the neurological systems or liver of people, pets, livestock, and wildlife.

Recreational exposure to toxic blue-green algae in humans may cause eye irritation, allergic skin rash, mouth ulcer, vomiting, diarrhea, and/or cold and flu-like symptoms. In pets, common symptoms include lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions, difficult breathing, and general weakness. Those who believe they or their pets have been exposed to blue-green algae and are experiencing any of these symptoms should seek medical attention.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services advises the following:

- Do not let pets drink lake water, swim through algae, scum or mats, or lick their fur after going into the water. Rinse pets with clean drinking water to remove algae from their fur.
- Avoid wading, swimming, water-skiing, or engaging in other activities in water containing algae blooms or scum or mats.
- Always shower with soap after swimming in a lake, wash hands after coming into contact with lake water, and wash swimming gear routinely.

Citizens can help minimize the occurrence of blue-green algae blooms by:

- Maintaining native vegetation along shorelines as buffer zones.
- Reducing the amount of fertilizer used on lawns.
- Using only phosphorous-free fertilizer when possible.
- Upgrading or fixing old or improperly functioning septic systems. Anyone with questions about their septic system should contact a licensed plumber.

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