



Cyanobacteria bloom in Long Lake

LIVING WITH A TOXIC LAKE

WHAT IS CYANOBACTERIA?

Cyanobacteria, commonly known as blue-green algae, is bacteria that can produce toxins that make people, pets, and wildlife sick. If toxin levels are too high, it can cause long term health effects and even be fatal. A bloom can make a lake look green and cloudy. Green, blue, or white scum, foam, or matting may form on the water's surface, and may have the appearance of paint floating on the water.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF CYANOBACTERIA

Toxins produced by cyanobacteria can have both short-term and long-term health effects for those who ingest or come into direct contact with toxic water. Reactions may include skin rash, dizziness or weakness, respiratory distress, abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting, liver damage, neurological symptoms, and—although rare—death. Those who frequently work or recreate in toxic waters may be



KITSAP PUBLIC
HEALTH DISTRICT

345 6th Street
Suite 300
Bremerton, WA
98337

360-728-2235
360-813-1379 (fax)

kitsappublichealth.org

more affected. Levels of toxins present in the water and length of time of exposure also play a role in the severity of symptoms a person may experience.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF THERE'S A BLOOM

If you see a cyanobacteria bloom in your lake, you should report it to the Kitsap Public Health District by calling (360) 728-2235 or submitting your concern on our website.

Contact us if:

- You see large numbers of dead fish in the lake.
- A cat or dog suddenly or unexplainably gets sick or dies.
- Someone has entered the water and experiences skin rash, dizziness or weakness, respiratory distress, abdominal pain, diarrhea, or vomiting.

If you see a bloom on the lake:

- Avoid ingesting lake water.
- Avoid swimming or other water contact sports.
- Avoid allowing access of your animals to the lake.
- Avoid consuming fish from the lake.

KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT'S ROLE

During times when blooms are most likely to occur, the Health District monitors problem lakes weekly. Depending on conditions of the bloom, we will take a sample for toxicity and may post the following signs:

- **Warning: Potentially Toxic Algae Bloom:** toxicity levels are below the standard
- **Warning: No Swimming Toxic Algae:** toxicity levels are above the standard

To stay safe, always remember that every cyanobacteria bloom has the potential to be toxic!

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