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NEWS RELEASE

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Municipalities Warn Against Cross Connecting Between Culinary and Secondary Water Systems Due to Harmful Algae

SALT LAKE CITY - Several municipalities have shut down their secondary water in response to the harmful algal bloom in Utah Lake and are warning residents to not cross-connect their secondary irrigation lines with their household culinary water systems.

As a precaution, the cities of Riverton, South Jordan, West Jordan and Herriman have shut down secondary water systems that draw water from Utah Lake for irrigation. The move follows the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) test results that show elevated levels of harmful algae in Jordan River, Utah Lake and related canals. (West Jordan does have secondary water it shut down to its parks, but residents get secondary water from canal companies)

Utah Lake is used as a main source of Riverton City's secondary water supply. Secondary water is commonly used for watering lawns and gardens.

"Residents can be assured that all culinary water is safe to consume and use for outdoor purposes," said Scott Hill, water director for Riverton City. The warning does not affect drinking water, since it comes from a different source - Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District, Hill said.

The public is advised that any modifications made by property owners to connect irrigation/watering systems to a culinary water source must be done according to specifications provided on the City website and must be inspected and approved by a City official before being implemented," said Hill. "Any attempts to use culinary water systems for irrigation watering without the proper approval can cause several health threats to the community and will result in criminal prosecution and civil liability."

Cross connecting means that the contaminated water would be pulled into the clean water system, thus contaminating the entire drinking water system

The Salt Lake County Health Department is advising that fruits and vegetables watered with the secondary water supply not be consumed. The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food also continues to advise that alternative water sources be used for crops, livestock and other animals.

Since algae blooms can last for days or weeks, and toxins can last for up to five days following a bloom, response agencies don't expect to know for at least a week when water from Utah Lake

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and Jordan River can be used again safely.

Agencies involved include various state agency departments, including the Departments of Agriculture and Food, Environmental Quality, Health, Natural Resources, Public Safety and various divisions within those departments. At the local level, responding agencies include Utah County and the Salt Lake County Health departments, irrigation companies and water districts, as well as the municipalities in the affected counties.

For updates, visit: <http://deq.utah.gov/locations/U/utahlake/algal-bloom.htm>

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About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) mission is to safeguard public health and quality of life by protecting and enhancing the environment. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah's air, land and water. For more information, visit www.deq.utah.gov, follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](#)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](#)), or call 1-800-458-0145.